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Palestinian Affairs

Peace Conference Attendance Issues Discussed

Al-Agha on U.S. Assurances

LD1210183891 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] Mr. Zakariya al-Agha has declared that the United States is hoping to be able to send out invitations to the peace conference on 20 October if the outstanding issues can be settled before then. Al-Agha said that the PLO supported the formation of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and that it was still demanding that the delegation should include Palestinians from East Jerusalem, which is something that Israel is refusing.

Al-Agha added that Washington, which also supports the formation of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, suggested that Palestinians from East Jerusalem be allowed to take part in the conference at a later stage, at which time the status of the holy city of Jerusalem would be discussed.

He went on to say: The Americans promised that the Palestinians will receive a letter of assurances, which will affirm that East Jerusalem is part of the occupied territories and that Washington does not approve of the annexation of the city by Israel, in order to make their proposals more attractive. Al-Agha also said that the Palestinians were expecting to obtain a final reply to outstanding matters during their meetings with Baker in Jerusalem in the next few days.

Jordanian-Palestinian Team Approved

JN1410083891 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 14 Oct 91 pp 1, 23

[Text] Tunis—The PLO Executive Committee approved the principle of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation at dawn yesterday. Responsible Palestinian sources in touch with the Palestinian leadership in Tunis told AL-RA'Y that the decision was made after a lengthy argument during the meeting of the Executive Committee in Tunis. The meeting lasted throughout the night of the day before yesterday and yesterday morning. The decision was made on condition that the Jordanian and Palestinian sides alternate heading the delegation.

The PLO Executive Committee called the PLO Central Council to a meeting in Tunis next Wednesday to put the final touches on the Executive Committee decision with regard to the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

The sources also said that the Executive Committee called for an urgent meeting with Jordanian officials. For this purpose, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, PLO Executive Committee member, arrived in Amman last night and held a meeting with the prime minister in the presence of al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, Palestinian ambassador in Amman.

For the same purpose, PLO Executive Committee members Dr. Mahmud 'Abbas "Abu-Mazin", Sulayman al-Najjab, and 'Abdallah al-Hurani will arrive today.

The same Palestinian sources said that the Executive Committee asked the Palestinian delegation comprising Fayyal al-Husayni, Hanan 'Ashrawi, and Zakariya al-Agha to return from Washington to occupied Palestine.

These sources expected Zakariya al-Agha, representative of the Gaza Strip in the Palestinian delegation, to arrive in Amman in the coming two or three days.

These sources also stressed that the peace conference will be held as scheduled at the end of this month.

The sources also stressed that Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin will meet with Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat in one of the Arab capitals.

No Decision Without Basics Resolved

JN1510100291 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 15 Oct 91 pp 20, 21

[Text] Amman—PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh said: "I greatly value His Majesty King Husayn's address, particularly with regard to the bases and rules of Palestinian coordination, and the view to participation in the peace process in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy in order to guarantee Palestinian and Arab rights." In an exclusive statement to AL-RA'Y, 'Abd-Rabbuh said: "What was presented by King Husayn constitutes a sound basis to develop relations and joint action in the coming period, particularly under the circumstances that require the highest degrees of unity between the Jordanian and Palestinian stands."

'Abd-Rabbuh said: "Our Palestine National Council [PNC] resolutions and the PLO's trends are in line with the trends contained in King Husayn's address. Both the Jordanian and Palestinian sides proceed from our realization of the difficulty and dangers of the current situation. Dealing with this situation requires adherence to the national and pan-Arab constants as well as realism in our current move."

'Abd-Rabbuh announced that Jordanian-Palestinian talks will begin in Amman today. He said: "We will review, during these talks, the results of our contacts with Washington and Moscow as well as our joint steps in the coming stage." He added: "There are no differences between the Jordanian and Palestinian stands with regard to their view of the peace process and our role vis-a-vis this process."

Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh said: "The problem is in the U.S. stand, which responded to the Israeli conditions and, so far, it ignored the basic Palestinian and Arab demands." He said: "The Palestinian message, which we have communicated to all parties, is very clear. It is summarized in one basic point, namely, it is difficult for us to decide participation without resolving the basic issues."

He held the United States responsible by saying: "America bears full responsibility if it pushes us to take a negative decision on the peace conference."

'Abd-Rabbuh said that in the meeting of the PLO Central Council, which will convene in Tunis on Wednesday, 17 October, to discuss the issue of the joint delegation and other issues, "we cannot discuss the decision of our participation in the peace conference, particularly if we do not receive appropriate answers with regard to Palestinian representation, the issue of Jerusalem, and settlements."

Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh said that the meeting between a Palestinian delegation and the Soviet foreign minister in Moscow was "an important occasion to present the results of the PNC session and the bases called for by the PLO to guarantee the peace process." He added: "The Soviet side understood our stands, and expressed support for them, particularly with regard to the cessation of settlements with the beginning of the peace conference, putting the issue of Jerusalem at the top of the conference agenda, and the comprehensive Palestinian representation from inside and outside the occupied territory as well as from Jerusalem."

He said: "The Soviet foreign minister informed us that he will address a message to this effect to U.S. Secretary Baker, in which he will point out that keeping these issues—settlements and Jerusalem—unresolved is a bomb that would explode the peace process and conference."

'Abd-Rabbuh noted that the PLO has received a message from the Soviet side on Baker's reply. "The American reply, regrettably, does not contain convincing and sufficient stands with regard to the cessation of settlements and the issue of Jerusalem."

West Bank Figures To Meet Committee Delegation

JN1410182391 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1710 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, who is in Amman, told our radio that Palestinian figures Hanan 'Ashrawi, Faysal al-Husayni, Zakariyah al-Agha, Sari Nusaybah, and others will arrive in Amman tomorrow to meet with the PLO Executive Committee delegation under Mahmud 'Abbas and with members 'Abd-Rabbuh, Sulayman al-Najjab, and 'Abdallah Hurani. 'Abd-Rabbuh added that the Palestinian figures will hold consultations with the PLO delegation before meeting with Baker in Jerusalem on Wednesday. 'Abd-Rabbuh added that the results of these consultations will be submitted to the PLO Central Council, which will convene in Tunis on the same day.

Informed sources say that the Palestinian figures will also coordinate with the Jordanians on the question of forming a joint delegation, one of the major obstacles to the convocation of the peace conference.

One of Baker's aides said that the the U.S. secretary of state hopes that the Palestinian figures will come to Amman to discuss Palestinian representation with the Jordanian officials before Baker meets them in Jerusalem on Wednesay.

Five-Way Arab Summit To Meet 'Within 10 Days'

JN1110170391 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1603 GMT 11 Oct 91

[Text] Brother Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, announced that a five-way summit for the Arab parties directly involved with the Arab-Israeli conflict will be held in Damascus within the next 10 days.

In statements to today's edition of the Lebanese newspaper AL-SAFIR, Qaddumi added that the summit will bring together Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and the PLO to coordinate Arab stands prior to the convening of the proposed Middle East peace conference.

Qaddumi went on to say that discussions with the United States are continuing on several issues, such as halting the building of settlements, total Israeli withdrawal, Palestinian representation, and the issue of Jerusalem; not to mention some other issues regarding settlement details, such as the U.S. interpretation of Resolution 242 and self-determination for the Palestinian people.

Executive Committee in 'State of Permanent Session'

LD1310191491 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] The PLO Executive Committee chaired by the brother President Abu-Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], decided to maintain its meetings in a state of permanent session in order to follow up on and discuss developments and the political efforts under way.

At its meeting yesterday in Tunis, the Executive Committee listened to important reports on the visit by its delegation to Moscow and their meeting there with the Soviet foreign minister and senior officials in the Soviet Foreign Ministry as well as on the visit by Palestinian public figures to Washington and their meeting with the U.S. secretary of state and senior officials of the U.S. State Department.

'Arafat Gives Address on Intifadah Anniversary

LD1110215891 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 11 Oct 91

[Address by Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, on the occasion of entering the 47th month of the intifadah, place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] Masses of the brave popular intifadah; heroes of the sacred revolution of stones; valiants in each town, village, and camp; sons of our struggling people in the homeland, the diaspora, and exile; masses of our great Arab nation: Here we are, brothers, approaching the beginning of the fifth year in the life of the blessed intifidah, the greatest mass movement in modern times. Here we are going through another month in the lines of the mythical epic being created and exported by the sons of our people, through their sacrifices and through their blood.

After circulating their blatant lies countless times on the abatement of the intifadah, here the fascist occupiers are being forced to recognize that it is impossible to interrupt it, forced to state the strength of the intifadah and its ability to extend its control and power to most regions in our homeland. [passage omitted] And greetings to all the mujahidin and strugglers: children, women and men, for whom, and for whose sake, our Palestinian National Council presented this unified Palestinian stand, and this speaking Palestinian democracy, and this great national achievement.

It is, therefore, a fresh victory for the PLO; a victory which reiterates facts for those who might have forgotten them, or would like to appear as if they have forgotten them, and consecrates anew self-evident truths and constants, reaffirming to the whole world that the source of any Palestinian decision, which would bind our people, is the Palestine National Council [PNC] and the PLO. It is thereby impossible to bypass or ignore a Palestinian homeland, because it is the difficult number, the difficult and the important number in the equation of the Middle East.

The blessed intifadah, O knights of the intifadah, was most prominent among those present; its voice was roaring, its mottos were surging, and its flags were streaming during the session of the PNC. Your voice was roaring during the PNC sessions, O heroes, through your demonstrations, your marches, your statements, and your petitions.

The task of protecting, bolstering, supporting, consolidating, and developing the intifadah were in the top of the agenda and in the forefront of the duties of the national tasks, which were agreed upon and adopted by our PNC, for the next stage. [passage omitted]

When we called the 20th session of our PNC the session of the martyrs, the session of Jerusalem, we were, through that, sending a clear message to everyone that Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem is the capital of the state of Palestine, the place from which Prophet Muhammad, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, ascended to heaven, and the birthplace of Jesus Christ, may peace be upon him.

Jerusalem, which feels proud to have our Arab and Islamic sanctities, is the symbol of our Arab and Palestinian characters. We have given its name to the PNC session to clarify the essence of our position toward the matters poltically put to us. We affirmed that Jerusalem was a red line by giving its name to the PNC session. What did we affirm by that, brothers? That Jerusalem was a red line, which we refuse to allow anyone to cross.

By that, too, we laid the cornerstone and axis which rally around the stances and hopes of our Arab and Islamic people, and those of all the faithful, be they Muslims or Christians.

The affirmation and challenge, which reigned during this fateful period of time, entrenched the Jerusalem question in terms of essence as well as in terms of representation in the consciences of the Arabs, Muslims, and Christian believers. [passage omitted]

We thus clearly conveyed that our people will be loyal to the martyrs and to the principles they struggled to achieve; that our people are ready to give more, to sacrifice more, and to do more toward the objective of Palestine, until certain and inevitable victory is attained.

Brothers and sisters; my beloved ones; dear all,

Our people once again reaffirmed their position and the firmness of the edifice of our national unity. We had discussions and polemics; we agreed and disagreed. But we left the meeting united in word and rank in this delicate and sensitive period. By so doing, those who had hoped that our council meeting would explode, and that the contract of our national unity would disintegrate, lost their bet. We hoped that we would be joined in the council by those who abstained, or were forced to abstain, whether from inside our occupied homeland or from outside it. We hope that obstacles will be lifted on those inside, and that national interest will prevail for those outside. [passage omitted]

At the same time, this PNC acted in affirmation of Palestinian legitimacy and Palestinian identity. It constituted a solid basis for our struggling masses amid the storms and the local and international changes which are trying to do away with Palestine, the people of Palestine, and the question of Palestine. But their efforts are to no avail, their efforts are to no avail. Their efforts are to no avail.

Our actions and efforts proceeded out of this conscious and precise evaluation of the course of events. We have acted on this solid ground.

The PNC firmly and clearly defined our position toward the challenges and complexities of the stage in this political matter. A precise study and responsible discussions took place, covering all the changes in our world, starting with the imbalance of the forces of power on the international arena as a result of the changes that took place in the USSR and Eastern Europe, and the imbalance of the forces in our region as a result of the Gulf crisis and war.

Our decision was that we refuse to be excluded or absent from any framework that discusses the cause and destiny of our people. What was our decision? It was that we refuse to be excluded or absent from any framework that discusses the cause and destiny of our people. Our decision was that

we refuse to see our people made the victim of the operation to build the new world order once more. This is what happened after World Wars I and II. We must use our constants and political programs to devise the appropriate formulas for dealing with the changes.

Thus our decision was to welcome the convening of the conference on peace in the Middle East, which was called for by Presidents Gorbachev and Bush, specifying the fundamentals which we are endeavoring to achieve concerning its convening and the objectives which we will strive for through our firm Palestinian principles. Peace must be a Palestinian peace, and in the interest of the Palestinian people, and not a submission to Israeli conditions and the Zionists' sick and vindictive dreams. Yes, the peace must be a Palestinian peace, and in the interest of the Palestinian people, and not a submission to Israeli conditions and the Zionists' sick and vindictive dreams.

Yes, my brothers, with this stance we set off from the position of defense to the position of attack, which they attempted to strike against after the Gulf crisis and war. This stance of ours, which was welcomed in Arab and international terms, has constituted a fulcrum for our political, diplomatic, national, and pan-Arab moves, with a view to the rebuilding of the Arab stance and gaining international support for our just cause and national bases. [passage omitted]

Sisters and brothers, O torches of light, O torches of hope, we are now entering a new phase after the conclusion of the Palestine National Council. This is a phase in which difficulties will increase and accumulate, in which challenges will be greater and more numerous. However, we will confront and overcome them armed. Armed with what, brothers? With our national unity; with our national unity, the firmness of which was firmly established by the council, and with our political program endorsed by our PNC. Hence we reaffirm our invitation to the Arab countries, which are directly concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict, to raise the level of coordination among them to the highest level possible. Let the crowning of that coordination be performed with the convening of an Arab summit that would constitute a turning point and a new page in the process of united Arab action, by overcoming all the bitterness of the previous phase.

We hope, we hope and we plead at the same time, that our sincere invitation receives a quick response from the brother Arab leaders, because the dangers are escalating and are threatening our pan-Arab existence and security in the shadow of the division and disarray—and also in the absence of Arab coordination, which is demanded by the supreme national and pan-Arab interest of our Arab nation in the shadow of the new developments—in the shadow of the regional and international new developments, which are shaking the world at present, and which threaten the Middle East area with dangerous eruptions. It is in the trust of history. It is in the trust of history and religious, national, and pan-Arab responsibility—it is a religious, national, and pan-Arab responsibility toward our nation, our future generations, and pan-Arab security—our pan-Arab security.

Heroes of the uprising; our people in all positions of the revolution and struggle; the admission of the leaders of the Israeli military establishment of the increased glow and effectiveness of the uprising proved the futile nature of the brutal repression campaigns. It confirms the continuous militant attraction—constant militant readiness—of our masses. It is certain that the steps taken by the unified national command at the level of the militant action and mobilization programs will take into consideration the needs of the masses, their suffering, their agonies, their troubles, and their ('keeping faith) with the needs and demands of our masses. The steps will entrench the mass character of the uprising and will strengthen the thrust of popular participation. [passage omitted]

Let that be our constitution, orientation, and course, to be adhered to and protected. Let us bring to account anyone who harms or strays from it. [passage omitted]

From here we can see that the outcome of the National Council session, which drew inspiration from the creativity of the faithful and struggling masses of the intifadah, as a new tool of struggle. The outcome consolidated their slogans and programs in the same way that national unity, as expressed by the Council proceedings, gives new force and impetus to our unified national action. This new force and impetus organizes all factions and forces in spreading defiance and resistance to the occupation for the sake of liberty, independence, unity, cohesion, love, and fraternity. [passage omitted]

O brothers, O beloved ones, O my people, O my kith and kin, O brothers, O beloved ones, O my family, O the whole of my family. Let us consolidate the ranks of our national unity in order that the thrust of the masses might go forward in support of the active elements of the intifadah. Yes, in order that the thrust of the masses might go forward in support in the active elements of the intifadah. Let us intensify our painful blows to the occupiers with all means and ways. And let the earth scorch under the feet of the invaders. [passage omitted]

Brothers, beloved ones, my people,

We are in extreme need for honesty in action, for loyalty to the objective, for faith in God, and in fighting for his way in this fateful period that our Palestinian cause and people are traversing at this important historical turn for the Arab nation. We need to act together as one, because the battle has open fronts. Yes, brothers, by God its fronts are open everywhere, in front, to the rear, to the north, on the right, at top and bottom. But it requires the truly faithful to advance to its ground, to repel its challenges, face up to all its difficulties, and to solve all its problems, which is the fate of the struggling and steadfast faithful. [passage omitted]

Your brother, Abu-Ammar.

Algeria

Reportage on Assembly Session on Electoral Laws

Ghozali Denies Differences With Assembly

LD1110105991 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 11 Oct 91

[Excerpts] There is no essential problem between the National People's Assembly [APN] and the government. This is what Mr. Sid Ahmed Ghozali stated when he was the guest of a heated dialogue program relayed by Algiers Radio yesterday.

Regarding this issue, the prime minister pointed out: If problems are defined as the presence of different views on the preparations for the electoral law, then there are problems. If problems are defined as something else other than the electoral law, then there are no problems at all. [passage omitted]

The discussions in the program included a news item published by the daily LE MATIN, which reported that the prime minister threatened to submit his resignation because of the differing positions of the government and the deputies. Ghozali stated that he has never talked about his resignation and that the issue is not on the cards at all. He added that the dialogue has continued between the government and APN since the submission of the draft amendments of the electoral laws. The dialogue could include different views. [passage omitted]

About the news of another devaluation of the dinar, Mr. Ghozali said: The way the news was handled was unacceptable. He stressed that APS was not guilty in this issue; APS was only doing its job. He pointed out that the devaluation took place only once in accordance with the agreement with the IMF in April 1991.

No Accord on Constituencies

LD1310133491 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Excerpts] All eyes, particularly those of the government and the political parties, are focused on the National People's Assembly, which is holding a public session this afternoon to vote on the two draft laws on the elections and the electoral constituency division. Today's session comes after three postponements because of differences in the conceptions of the government and the Assembly's Legislative Committee over some points in the two draft laws, such as proxy [voting], age of candidates, independent candidates, and the number of electoral constituencies.

The consultations that took place between the two sides during the past days have led to agreement on these points with the exception of the last point. Colleague Fodil Saadeddine, who has been following the autumn session of the Assembly, provides the following report:

[Saadeddine] [passage omitted] Despite the narrowing of differences concerning the first draft law, differences continue between them over the second draft law which deals with electoral divisions. The government has adhered to its plan of 337 electoral constituencies, which means the addition of four electoral constituencies, while the Legislative Committee agreed to reduce the number of [proposed] constituencies by nine, thus making the number of constituencies 430.

A well-informed Assembly source has affirmed to us that the committee has no intention of making any further concessions and that it has dealt very flexibly with two draft laws and has the best intention of speeding up the general elections as soon as possible. The source added that the committee was prepared to concede two steps in return for any one step by the government. The source, however, feels optimistic that the Assembly will endorse both draft laws so that responsibility will move to the other parties.

Meanwhile, there seem to be some delaying tactics by some of the deputies who preferred to keep silent until the convocation of the public session and the holding of the voting to decide the issue. In this context, we have learned that the so-called Silent Group has been preparing a list of signatures calling for a return to the 1986 constituency division of 295, which is in operation at present. It seems the group has collected a large amount of signatures numbering, according to an Assembly source, about 120 signatures, and the list is still open for further signatures.

Finally, will Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali accept a fait accompli should the Assembly endorse the complementary report of the committee, or will he ask the president of the Republic to order a second reading, in which case the number of possible ways out of this dilemma will increase?

Deputies Urged To Work With Government

LD1310141591 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Excerpts] The leadership of the Socialist Forces Front [FFS] is today organizing a sit-in strike in front of the Parliament building to protest what [FFS President] Hocine Ait Ahmed described as plots against the democratic course. This move falls within the sphere of fears that the government plan might be aborted, thereby creating a constitutional crisis which would obstruct the democratic march.

The repeated postponement of the parliamentary voting has aroused a great deal of controversy and many question marks have been raised. Some analysts went to the extent of saying that there were certain parties behind the deputies acting against the government. Others felt that there was a maneuver to defame the deputies. Between the two views, a third view has emerged saying that there were efforts to detract from both the government and the deputies alike. Colleague Mohamed Hassan Cheyech comments:

[Cheyech] [passage omitted] Logic demands that all participants in the political arena help the deputies and government to resolve the matter. Hence, it is strange to see forces emerging in the arena and acting indirectly to create sedition between the government and the Assembly. The citizens therefore have the right to inquire about the number of those who genuinely want to see legislative elections held at the right dates and under the right conditions.

These parties have been trying to depict the government as a victim between the jaws of parliamentary pincers operated by outside forces. Undoubtedly, the citizens would like to know the truth. In this case, the government should provide all the necessary clarifications and indeed name names, so that the efforts of all would rally around it, particularly those who do not contemplate reaching power by fast methods.

We must recall that those parties which claim to stand on the side of the government defined their position publicly, saying that they will not help the government to find solutions for the economic and social crises of the country and setting only one task for the government, namely, the holding of legislative elections. This behavior is unlawful as the president of the Republic is the only authorized quarter to define the tasks of the government he appoints. Never has the president of the Republic been so naive as to disregard the future of the homeland and the citizens for the sake of elections that will certainly take place. [passage omitted]

We strongly believe that the prime minister now needs everyone to make efforts to tackle the current economic situation, which has no parallel, and the exacerbation of the social situation. We hope the deputies of the nation will work together with the government, with their renowned sincerity and loyalty, in preparing the state budget for the coming year, which is considered one of the most difficult budgets. [passage omitted]

Assembly Passes Draft Electoral Law

LD1410044891 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] After passing the draft electoral bill at the start of yesterday's proceedings, the National People's Assembly endorsed, late tonight, the draft law on constituency boundaries, with a majority of 152 for, seven against, and 30 abstentions. Thus the deputies adopted the criteria defining an electoral constituency which were proposed by the legislative committee in its complementary report. These criteria fix the allocation of one seat for every 80,000 inhabitants in the big cities with a population of over 100,000, one seat for every 60,000 inhabitants in the northern provinces, one seat for every 55,000 in the provinces of the high plateau, one seat for every 45,000 inhabitants in the southern provinces, and one seat for every 25,000 inhabitants for the provinces of the extreme south.

The second article of the draft law, which concerns the criteria for fixing the number of constituencies, was at the center of the debate, and was passed with a majority of 134 for, 100 against, and 18 abstentions. Thus the number of deputies in the next parliament will be 430, despite the fact that the government proposed, in its latest amendments, 373 electoral constituencies.

Immediately after the proceedings were adjourned, the prime minister was asked by the press about his government's position on the results of the vote on the electoral draft law. He replied that the position would be defined shortly, after the meeting of the Council of Government. As for putting the draft law to a second reading, he answered that this was the prerogative of the president of the Republic.

More on Assembly Voting

LD1410143191 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] The main event on the national scene has been the endorsement of the draft bills on elections and the division of electoral constituencies according to the formulation of the Parliamentary Legislative Committee by the National People's Assembly yesterday evening, particularly in regard to the articles which remained in contention between the committee and the government, namely those concerning the electoral constituencies, voting by proxy, and the age eligibility of the candidates.

The head of the government, Mr. Sid Ahmed Ghozali, who intervened before the voting to emphasize the need for adopting applicable decisions that do not encroach upon the credibility of the Assembly, the government, and its program, looked dissatisfied after the voting and confined his replies to journalists' questions about his attitude to the following statement: We will decide at the meeting of the Government Council.

The national radio has learned that the Council of Government is very likely to meet today to discuss the subject. More details on the deputies' voting on the two drafts in a report by Suad Farhan:

[Suad Farhan] Yesterday evening the National People's Assembly had to make a most important parliamentary decision concerning the vote on the amendments to the electoral law.

After casting votes on this bill three times, the endorsement was carried by a majority of 229 votes for, seven votes against, and 16 deputies abstaining, out of 252 deputies present at the session. The vote was carried with the attendance of members of the government after Mr. Ghozali's address to the deputies.

The deputies voted on the majority of articles for the proposals of the legislative committee, and they differed with it in two cases.

They disagreed in regard to the question of voting by a married couple without letter of attorney, thus rejecting the government amendment regarding the voting by proxy which caused much controversy. The government

insisted on imposing the vote by proxy for the married couple, while the deputies supported the amendment of the Legislative Committee, which says proxy is not necessary and it is sufficient for the voter to present the family book and the voting card.

The deputies also rejected the amendment of the government and the legislative committee concerning the eligible age of nominees, and have endorsed a proposal requiring the age of 28 years.

As regards the draft bill on constituencies, the criteria laid down by the legislative committee in its report were adopted according to the following formula: Deciding the number of people for every seat according to the population of the province within the framework of two principles; namely, to represent every province with no fewer than two deputies, and to work toward the acknowledgement of the acquired right for each province since 1986. Thus, the number of deputies of the next Assembly will be 430 deputies instead of the 377 deputies proposed by the government.

Regarding the independent candidates, the deputies endorsed a condition that the independent candidate has to provide 300 signatures, five percent of which should be subject to administrative control to ensure their authenticity. The deputies rejected the third candidate principle in the second round and kept the system of single name voting in two rounds.

According to what Sid Ahmed Ghozali told journalists after the Assembly session yesterday evening, the government's position on the outcome of the voting on the electoral bill will be decided shortly after the meeting of the Government Council. On returning the bill for a second reading, the head of the government said that is the prerogative of the president of the Republic.

FLN Leader Holds News Conference

LD1410153191 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Abdelhamid Mehri, general secretary of the National Liberation Front [FLN], this morning held a news conference at the party headquarters during which the National Assembly voting was the focus of the conference. Here are details from Ahmed Kheda:

[Kheda] Mr. Mehri started by saying the voting of the National People's Assembly on the two electoral laws will open the way for organizing the legislative elections. He emphasized that the voting was the outcome of work by the government.

Replying to a question concerning a second reading of the two laws, Mr. Mehri stressed that he sees no use in that and it will not be in the interest of the country, particularly in view of the controversy about the Assembly. Mehri expressed his hope that the date of the legislative elections will be fixed in the nearest possible time so as to come out, as he said, from administrative pluralism to real political pluralism, emphasizing the necessity for rationalizing the political debate and excluding it from personal quarrels.

Mr. Mehri remained insistent on the question of a national coalition following the emergence of the coming National Assembly so that attention will be focused on a unified plan that will ensure stability for two or three years.

Concerning the accusations of the head of government, Mr. Ghozali, to the effect that the FLN is not prepared to accept the principle of rotation of power, Mr. Mehri replied that the remarks were based on untrue facts. He stressed that he still insists on his right to reply.

Mr. Mehri was positive concerning what has been achieved following the vote of the National People's Assembly on the two electoral laws. He said agreement has been achieved concerning the form of the elections, and even the Islamic Salvation Front which was objecting to it has now agreed on it.

Mr. Mehri affirmed that the deputies have arrived at a compromise solution to the two presented draft bills.

Two Parties React to Assembly Decision

LD1410161591 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] How have the political parties received the deputies' endorsement of the two draft laws? National radio has recorded the opinions of a few parties, those it could contact before noon today.

First, the Algerian Renewal Party position:

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] The People's National Assembly has ignored the government bill and voted on its law. Now the matter is between the head of government and the president of the Republic either to accept or to nullify those two laws. Therefore, as far as the Algerian Renewal Party is concerned, we do not know up until now the date and the manner of the election, which alone is capable of solving this acute political crisis. [end recording]

The Movement for Democracy in Algeria position:

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] The Movement for Democracy in Algeria considers the People's National Assembly voting as a prominent phenomenon for an internal crisis among the feuding parties within the authority emanating from the one party system. This result is very far from the democratic course which we hope for and aspire to as a whole. Remember that our movement, as an opposition party, has leaned toward peaceful and democratic expression on the political scene. However, today the parties in the responsible structures of power ought to shoulder their own responsibility before the current serious situation emanating from the outcome of the People's National Assembly's voting. We as a movement are determined to work continuously to impose the word of the people in conformity with the principles of democracy. Of course, this is after recognizing the positions of both the

government and the Presidency of the Republic in light of the recent Assembly maneuvers since [words indistinct]. [end recording]

More Party Reaction

LD1410174491 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Parties continue to react to the adoption of amendments introduced to the two electoral laws.

The Social Democratic Party considers that the deputies have abandoned the constitutional right recognized for women and that, except for a few amendments, the text is nothing but a continuation of the electoral constituency boundaries that led to the sad situation known to all. In brief, the Social Liberal Party has denounced the People's National Assembly and urged the president of the Republic to take urgent measures. It also calls for the Assembly to be dissolved.

On his part, Miloud Brahimi denounced the two electoral laws adopted by the People's National Assembly on 13 October. Miloud Brahimi, honorary chairman of the Algerian League for Human Rights, told AFP today that the two electoral laws and electoral constituency boundaries are against the constitution and in contradiction to the clean elections promised by the government.

Ghozali Dissatisfied With Vote

LD1410232591 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali met with journalists this evening to discuss the preliminary position of his government regarding the vote of the deputies. Our colleague Mouhcine Slimani attended this meeting and compiled the following report:

[Slimani] At the start of this restricted meeting with a few journalists, Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali described the government position regarding the deputies' vote yesterday on the elections and constituency boundaries laws. He stated that the government had not been informed about this matter and that the government was presented with the articles as it was about to enter the parliament hall. He added that the government would meet this evening to adopt a decision regarding the deputies' vote.

With regard to the circumstances that may compel the government to adopt a position regarding the current law, he said that to submit the law for a second reading—in the event of a second rejection—would lead to the elections taking place within the framework of the current law. Also, in the event of the dissolution of parliament, the elections would be held within the scope of this law.

The prime minister concluded by saying that such a situation would lead to a legal impasse, and consequently to a political crisis. He added that the aim behind creating such a political situation would primarily be to hold the elections within the framework of the current law. The second aim, as the prime minister added, would be to hold early presidential elections—something that was defended by some people even inside the the parliament, as he put it, by calling for its dissolution.

In this connection, he pointed out the petition submitted by 90 deputies to the president of the Republic in which they called for the dissolution of the Assembly.

Regarding the law on constituency boundaries, Sid Ahmed Ghozali indicated that the number of 430 constituencies is an exaggeration. Mr. Ghozali also hinted that some people are trying to hamper the activity of the government by using the Assembly as a tool. He said that the reputation of the Assembly was being harmed more than that of the government.

Regarding the issue of proxy voting, voting through the family registration book, and even voting according to age, he said that the government will go back to the Constitutional Assembly to decide on the constitutional nature of these articles.

Regarding the government's promises on holding elections, he said that the government is committed to its promises and at the same time would like to have an electoral program that enjoys full credibility, including respect for the dates. The prime minister has not ruled out the possibility of some people wishing to delay the elections by changing the government's electoral program.

The prime minister added that he will continue his work despite the difficulties and obstacles facing the government, and that he is ready to overcome what he decribed as hurdles, because, as he put it himself, he has mastered the chess game.

Egypt

Mubarak, Baker Grant News Conference

NC1410125491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1201 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Cairo, 14 Oct (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has expressed his hope that the Middle East peace conference will be convened at the end of October. He praised U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's "extraordinary efforts" in this respect to arrive at "a good solution" to the 50-year-old Middle East problem. He stressed that "it is high time that a result was reached" to resolve this problem. This came in a news conference held today by President Husni Mubarak and James Baker, who is currently visiting Cairo on the first leg of his eighth tour of the Middle East, after talks that lasted approximately 4 hours and 45 minutes.

Referring to the talks with James Baker, President Mubarak said: "Today we discussed issues related to this problem and we hope that the peace conference will convene at the end of this month." He pointed out that Secretary of State Baker is visiting the region to put on

the final touches and settle certain points with the region's countries to reach acceptable results and move the peace process forward.

At the outset of the news conference and commenting on President Mubarak's statement, Secretary of State James Baker voiced his hope that the Middle East peace conference will convene before the end of this month. He said that this was proposed by U.S. President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. He emphasized that the United States is committed to "this goal."

Addressing President Mubarak, Baker said: "Mr. President, let me thank you for receiving me in Cairo and let me say very simply that no one has offered as effective a contribution and as great an effort to the peace process as you have. I would like to express the United States' appreciation of the efforts you have exerted along with all parties."

Responding to a question on Palestinian representation in the peace conference, Baker said: "I have met with Palestinians from the occupied territories in the past week and we will continue these talks." He said: "I have no specific timetable in this respect, but I look forward to meeting again with the Palestinians from the occupied land. I believe that I will meet with them in Jerusalem on Wednesday."

On the Egyptian and Syrian stands in the wake of his meeting in Cairo last Saturday with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, President Mubarak said: We are coordinating with all parties concerned with the Middle East issue and we held extended talks with President al-Asad on the different issues.

In this respect, President Mubarak expressed the belief that the Syrian president will be interested in attending the peace conference once a date is set.

On the date of the Middle East peace conference, Mubarak said it has not been determined. He also said: We will take part in the conference wherever it is held.

The president remarked that holding the conference in Geneva, The Hague, or Buenos Aires is not the main issue. Let the conference be held anywhere because what counts is the content of the conference, he said. The president said this matter will be decided after Baker's tour of the region.

Asked about the major obstacle hindering the convocation of the peace conference, President Mubarak said: We cannot say that there is a major obstacle or very difficult problem. I believe that there are small problems that can be resolved during Baker's current tour. He continued: We are giving the U.S. secretary of state as much support as we can to convene the conference and reach results as soon as possible.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was asked whether the land- for-peace formula is provided for in the U.S. letters of guarantees to the parties taking part in the conference. He said the basics of the conference have not changed in the past six or seven months. All agree that they will get together to find a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of UN Resolutions 242 and 338, he said.

Baker added that these are the "magic words" and the "starting points" for the conference as well as for the subsequent negotiations. He asserted that these points have not changed.

In response to a question on the interpretation of Security Council Resolution 424, Baker said: "The various parties have their own interpretations of Resolution 242. These interpretations differ from one party to another. The negotiations will eventually decide the meaning of the resolution." He said: "The premises on whose basis they will meet, however, have not changed since we began this process five to seven months ago."

Asked about Palestinian representation from Jerusalem, Baker said: "The issue of Palestinian representation is still under discussion." He added: "As I pointed out in reply to a previous question, I met recently with Palestinians from the occupied territories in Washington and I will meet with them again in Jerusalem on Wednesday. We are still discussing this issue."

Responding to a question on the U.S. letters of guarantees to the various parties and when they will be sent, Baker said: "They are still under discussion, though we have reached solutions to numerous differences. He added: We may not be able to solve some of these differences conclusively, but "at a certain stage" we have to consider sending invitations to the peace conference. He said: We, along with all parties, reviewed "the draft of the proposed invitation." He expressed his belief that there is a measure of agreement regarding the content of this draft.

The president was asked whether there will be an Arab five-party summit before the Middle East peace conference. He said: The question of holding an Arab or minisummit in the near future has not been decided yet. The summit will be held when there is something concrete to discuss, he said.

The president continued: Views may be exchanged and the parties concerned may cooperate to give an impetus to the peace conference, nothing more.

On whether he will meet with Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat, the president said: When the situation calls for a meeting with Yasir 'Arafat to help the peace process we will do that.

Mr. Baker was asked about the Israeli Peace Now Movement and its efforts to obtain a ruling from the Israeli higher constitutional court that building settlements is illegal. Mr. James Baker said: Our stand on the settlement issue is known. The settlements constitute an obstacle to peace.

Asked whether Lebanon will attend the peace conference, the U.S. secretary of state said: Until invitations are addressed and responses are received, I cannot predict who will attend.

Mr. Baker continued that the U.S. side has held talks with the Lebanese Government and agreed on a letter of guarantees. We believe, we hope, they share this belief with us, that the letter of guarantees is convenient for the Lebanese Government. In the past they indicated that they welcomed this process. Lebanon can attend the peace conference. This is all I can say, he concluded.

Mubarak Interviewed on Peace Conference

NC1410232091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2200 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Cairo, 14 Oct (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has expressed his conviction that the entire Arab world wants peace, saying that the Arab states with which he deals talk of peace and want to reach a peaceful settlement.

This statement came in an interview with President Mubarak by the European Television Channel—TV 5 Europe—that transmits via satellite to more than 40 countries. The interview will be aired tomorrow at 2000 French time, 2100 Cairo time. AL-AHRAM will carry the full text of the interview in tomorrow's edition.

After what happened in Kuwait, President Mubarak emphasized, I am convinced that everyone must continue on the road to peace because it is the only way to establish security and improve our peoples' standard of living. If we continue on the path of war, he said, the result will be more poverty and further deterioration of living conditions. The leaders of the states and I have the responsibility of preventing our countries' resources from being squandered, he added. On the contrary, Mubarak continued, we must avoid war and its losses in order to develop the economy, build houses, and provide work opportunities so that Egypt can enjoy a high standard of living like the developed countries.

President Mubarak affirmed that Egypt's role in peace efforts are not starting now: They began when the Palestinian issue began. We are doing all we can to achieve a just settlement because peace is our real and ultimate goal.

We have open relations with Israel and we fear nothing, Mubarak added. We also have relations with the Palestinians, all the parties concerned, and with the confrontation states, he said, adding: We are working in coordination with all these parties.

The president said that he intends to send an envoy to Israel and that he maintains contact with the Palestinians, Jordan, and all the parties involved.

He hopes that through cooperation with the United States, the European countries, and the Soviet Union, the peace conference will be convened and all the cards will be put on the negotiating table and the peace process will finally begin. The peace process will be long and will require lengthy negotiations, Mubarak added.

One of the reasons for the delay in convening the peace conference, Mubarak said, is that some states are talking about guarantees now. Syria wants guarantees regarding the Golan Heights; the Palestinians say that the guarantees are not sufficient as far as they are concerned. I believe, he said, that we will overcome these problems soon and that the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation will be formed presently. We have a golden opportunity that will not be repeated, Mubarak added.

The Palestinian issue is an issue of lost opportunities for both the Israelis and the Palestinians, Mubarak noted. However, he added, I believe that the international community is now confronting this issue with great seriousness.

President Mubarak emphasized that Israel has dismantled the Camp David accord of its content on the Palestinian issue, stressing former U.S. President Carter's statement that Israel had altered the spirit of the accord.

The president said that Israel must prove that it really wants to reach a solution. If we want peace, he added, the Palestinians must regain their territories and this will be agreed upon at the negotiating table. If Israel continues building settlements on more than 60 percent of the occupied territories, Mubarak added, it will be difficult to reach an agreement. Israel must return the Palestinian territories if we want a just peace, he said.

Israel is complicating the issue by continuing to build settlements; it is complicating the issue as far as we and the peace conference are concerned, Mubarak stressed.

President Mubarak lauded the U.S. stand on the settlements, saying: We cannot differentiate between the Palestinians and the PLO, and therefore, we must confront the matter in a practical way. Palestinians at home and abroad want peace. Israel knows that not one Palestinian at home or abroad can negotiate without PLO approval.

I am ready to meet with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat anywhere, Mubarak said, adding that he met with him in Libya. If we want to reach a settlement, we must be in touch with 'Arafat and help him, the Egyptian president said, especially because he demonstrated a great deal of flexibility during the recent Palestine National Council meeting.

President Mubarak said that he cannot deny or ignore the Soviet Union's role in efforts to reach a solution, stressing that even the United States is maintaining contact and coordinating policies with the USSR.

Despite its current economic problems, he added, the Soviet Union still (?exists) and we (?still need) its support. Europe also has a role to play, he said.

The president said that he does not believe that an American or European peace will be imposed, saying

that peace has only one form, namely, that everybody assume his responsibility. Europe has an important role to play here, especially because it is geographically close to the Middle East, he said, adding that the Soviet Union also has a role. All the forces must coordinate their policies to bring the stands of the parties concerned closer in order to achieve peace, Mubarak noted. It will not be a Soviet, European, or American peace, he said: It will be a just and lasting peace to guarantee the peoples' rights.

The president described the European role as extremely important, stressing that Europe must be effective in this role because of the ties all states in the region have with Europe.

Using the Gulf war as an example, President Mubarak asked: Would it have been possible for the United States to enter the Gulf war without the support of Europe or the stand the USSR adopted?

During the interview, President Mubarak responded to questions by three European journalists on the situation in Iraq.

President Mubarak said that the Iraqi president is still in power, a matter which concerns the Iraqi people. I cannot, he said, interfere in Iraq's internal affairs. The Iraqi people have to decide who should be president. If they accept him as president, it is their business. They will bear the consequences of his actions, which led to the current situation in Iraq: The destruction of Iraqi capabilities and resources and, regrettably, the degrading standard of living of Iraqis, something we do not like seeing.

We are trying, along with other states, to help provide food for the Iraqi people and medicine for their children, Mubarak said, noting however that principal assistance must come from the people of Iraq. As long as they accept this regime, this is their business and they should bear the consequences, he said, adding: We cannot help anybody who does not want to help himself.

The president emphasized that he cares for the Iraqi people and the children of Iraq and the helpless and powerless sons of Iraq.

Mubarak said he has no confidence in the current Iraqi regime, especially in its statements. He said that he had sincerely advised Saddam Husayn to avoid all this by withdrawing from Kuwait. The response, he added, came in the form of vilifications, abuse, and contempt for what we said. I accepted all this graciously, hoping that Saddam would realize the seriousness of the situation.

The only regional states that will deal with Saddam, President Mubarak said, are those that want something from him. This is a small group of states, and I do not believe that they can achieve their objectives in the current international and world circumstances.

President Mubarak said that he has discovered that Iraq has a formidable nuclear network. He asked: For whom are these weapons meant? Israel? He then said that Saddam had often told him that he had no intention to fight Israel and that he would fight Israel only if it fought Egypt or our brothers in Jordan. Because Egypt had a peace agreement with Israel, he must have had other objectives, Mubarak said.

In his interview, the president pointed out that it was Saddam who signed the Shatt al-'Arab agreement with Iran in Algiers in 1975. In 1980, Saddam thought that Iran was lifeless, Mubarak said, he started the war because he wanted to take Shatt al-'Arab, believing that the operation would last two weeks or a month. Instead it lasted eight years during which Iraq lost many people to death or incapacitation. The president asked: What did he gain? He wanted to take Shatt al-'Arab to brandish his stick and frighten the Gulf states, Mubarak said, and he lost a great deal. He did not even give Iraq a chance to catch its breath before he arranged the Gulf operation—something which no one could imagine.

President Mubarak noted that Saddam attacked Kuwait, a country which had helped him a great deal during the Iraq-Iran war. Iran's stand toward Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and the states that helped Iraq was one of enmity. After having given him billions of dollars, he wanted to invade them, the president said, describing such behavior as against all principles and all charters.

President Mubarak said: I believe my 10 years in power have been 10 years of hard work. Before we began implementing our plans, we convened an economic conference to define the means and the plan on the basis of which we would solve our economic problems.

The president added: We began implementing the first five-year plan. The basic problem in Egypt was that of utilities because we could not begin development and build houses without first securing the utilities.

The president said that all the states in the world face economic problems. The economic problem in Egypt has deep roots in the past for which we seek to find solutions. We are doing everything in our power openly, we do nothing secretly, he said. We have actually succeeded in finding solutions to many problems and things are better than before, he added. Despite the difficulty of reform and the hike in prices, the Egyptian people are aware of the reality of the situation, he noted.

The president said that Egypt will face some difficult years. I told my people in May, Mubarak said, so that they would help us in the reform operation.

President Mubarak said: We are now building 13 cities, eight of which are now fully functioning. This provides work opportunities for the citizens and opportunities for production and exports and meeting the needs of the population. This vitality could not have been achieved if the basic utilities were not available.

The president emphasized that democracy and freedoms have flowered in Egypt. Since I assumed power, I have

not suppressed any opinion and none of the newspapers has been subjected to censorship. Let them say what they want. The supremacy of law prevails and I believe in it completely, Mubarak added. When respect for human rights or something of this sort is sometimes alluded to, I say that everything takes place within the framework of the law, Mubarak said, adding: We do not interfere in the work of the judiciary at all.

The president said: I challenge any person to say that I have suppressed an opinion or newspaper. I have a conviction that democracy is the safety valve in our country.

The president emphasized that the freedom of the press in Egypt is a guarantee and democracy is a guarantee. This is why, he said, I hope that democracy in our country will progress, that development will continue, and that Egypt will become a more dynamic state. We still have a long way to go, he concluded.

Tunisia

Ben Ali Meets With 'Arafat on Peace Summit

LD1410183291 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali met with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat [Abu-Ammar] in the presence of Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya and Hakam Bal'awi, Fatah Central Committee member, at Carthage Palace at noon today. Yasir 'Arafat expressed his pleasure at his consultation with President Ben Ali on the results and details of the development of the Palestinian question under the current historic and fateful conditions, particularly since the peace conference called for by the two superpowers—the United States and the USSR—is drawing near. Abu-Ammar said he briefed the Tunisian president on the full details of talks in Washington between the Palestinian delegation and the U.S. secretary of state and on similar talks held in Moscow with the Soviet foreign minister. He also briefed him on the Palestinian movement in the Arab arena and the escalation of the intifadah in the occupied territory, despite the Israeli repressive measures against the Palestinian people and the Islamic and Christian sanctities. 'Arafat said that he expressed to President Ben Ali—and, through him, to all Maghreb leaders—his thanks for the great message they addressed to the White House on the cause of the Palestinian people and the holy places in Jerusalem. He said that the Maghreb memorandum is important and clarifies many matters and provides all details. He said that this proves the importance of the Maghreb leaders' role in the Palestinian cause and their practical and actual participation in various fields, including the constant contacts they have been making with the U.S. Administration and the USSR and the other parties. The Palestinian president reiterated his thanks to the Tunisian president and people over their principled stand on the side of the Palestinian cause and the struggling Palestinian people.

Sudan Criticized for Supporting Ennahdha Movement

LD1410223991 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Excerpts] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali supervised a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Democratic Constitutional Rally [RCD] at Carthage Palace this morning.

The Political Bureau reviewed the results of the by-elections to the legislature and proudly recorded the great turnout at these by-elections, the voting for the RCD candidates, and the citizens' expression of understanding for the policies of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. [passage omitted]

In the light of a report presented by Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya, the Political Bureau reviewed the state of relations with Sudan.

The Political Bureau expressed its deep displeasure with the aid and facilities which some elements of the so-called Ennahdha movement derive from Sudan, in spite of the fact that the terrorist character and criminal methods of that movement have been proven to everybody and in spite of the repeated promises by the Sudanese authorities to stop these forms of behavior which harm bilateral relations, instead of promoting fraternity and cooperation.

The Political Bureau emphasized that while Tunisia is loyal to the constants of its foreign policy, which are based on mutual respect and nonintervention in the internal affairs of other countries, it categorically rejects such forms of behavior, eapecially when they come from a fraternal country at a time when Tunisia finds complete understanding and support from the friendly countries when they became convinced of the reality of the aims and methods of this terrorist movement.

The Political Bureau studied the development of Tunisian-Algerian relations in the light of the exchange of visits between the senior officials of both countries. The Political Bureau expressed its hope that these visits will contribute to the consolidation of cooperation between the two fraternal countries on the basis of mutual respect and joint interests in order to materialize the text and spirit of the treaty of fraternity and concord between Tunisia and Algeria and of the Arab Maghreb Union treaty.

Kuwait

118 Freed Kuwaitis Return From Iraq

NC1410103291 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Counselor Ghazi 'Ubayd al-Sammar, minister of justice and legal affairs, chairman of the national committee for POW's and MIA's affairs, has stated that 118 persons arrived in the country via 'Ar'ar in Saudi Arabia on board a special Kuwaiti plane this morning. The International Red Cross had handed them over to the concerned authorities in Saudi Arabia.

It has been ascertained that among the arrivals is one Kuwaiti civilian who was a POW in Iraq and 103 Kuwaiti family members who were in Iraq before the country's liberation. They have been released as part of the family reunion program. Also among the arrivals were 11 POW's of unspecified nationalities, one Syrian, [words indistinct], and one Iraqi woman who is the mother of Kuwaiti children.

Interior Ministry Views Iraqi Infiltration

LD1210142191 London KUNA in Arabic 1334 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] Kuwait, 12 Oct (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti Interior Ministry has announced that the coast guard patrols have thwarted an Iraqi infiltration attempt. All 55 infiltrators have been captured by the patrols. An authoritative Interior Ministry source pointed out, in a statement today, that the Kuwaiti coast guard patrols were able to catch all the Iraqi infiltrators as they were trying to enter the country by sea aboard seven boats in the northern region on 11 October. The source added that all infiltrators and boats have been referred to the concerned security authorities.

Government To Sign Defense Agreement With UK

LD1210100691 London KUNA in Arabic 0855 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] Kuwait, 12 Oct (KUNA)—Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim has revealed that the security agreement between Kuwait and Britain will be signed within two months under the framework of joint defense cooperation and there will be no provisions outside this framework.

The defense minister, in a statement published in today's issue of AL-WATAN, said that Kuwait is exercising its legitimate right when it deals with friendly states to safeguard its security against any invader.

As for the security agreement with France, which France has initially agreed to sign, Shaykh al-Salim said it will be signed after the agreement with Britain is concluded. Kuwait had previously signed a security agreement with the United States in the middle of September during the Kuwaiti defense minister's visit to Washington before the visit of the amir of Kuwait at the beginning of this month. Shaykh 'Ali al-Salim confirmed that he will pay a visit to Britain but he did not set a date for it.

As to whether Kuwait has any intention to conclude a deal on advanced arms and planes to bolster its defense capabilities, the Kuwait defense minister said this matter has not been discussed and he has no information about it.

Saudi Arabia

Baker's Middle East Visit, Iraqi Regime Viewed

LD1210133691 Riyadh SPA in English 1229 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] Riyadh, Oct 12, SPA—The importance of the current visit of U.S. Secretary of State, James Baker to the Middle East and the continuing arrogance of the Iraqi regime were two major topics that received editorial comments in today's newspapers.

The Jeddah-based AL-MADINA said Baker's eighth trip to the region is primarily aimed at exchanging views to decide time and venue for the Middle East peace conference. As usual, it deplored Israel's posture to block the march towards peace by building more settlements in the occupied territory.

The Jeddah-based AL-BILAD noted the global acknowledgment of U.N. Resolutions Numbers 338 and 242 and said Israel must give up completely the occupied Arab lands and restore rights of the palestinian people to self-determination.

For its part, the Jeddah-based OKAZ said the Iraqi regime disclosed much of its aggressive intention to impose its domination on the Arab nation by building a huge destructive power. The paper asked what is the purpose, goal and target of Baghdad's massive nuclear power? "There could be no other purpose, except, fulfilment of Saddam Husayn's pride and personal phobia," it said.

Dealing with Baker's tour, AL-JAZIRAH said it demonstrates the American sincere desire for peace in the region and confirms our trust for the American serious approach in this direction. AL-RIYADH regretted Israel's new foolish behaviour and urged the international community to adopt punitive actions against Tel Aviv if it fails to meet conditions of peace in the region.

AL-YOM deplored the Iraqi Government's insistence to continue with its faulty behaviour and its failure to learn lessons from the past, which brought it to the verge of complete disaster. It affirmed that the Arab states had taken a right stand based on its Islamic creed and international consensus.

Protest of Bombing Sent to Turkey

JN1210215991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2051 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Oct (INA)—Iraq has strongly protested to Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's announcement yesterday that Turkish aircraft, on the morning of 11 October, carried out a military operation in northern Iraq. Two warplanes crossed the Iraqi border south of Cukurca in the Hakkari Region and infiltrated 7 km into Iraqi territory and bombed Iraqi villages.

The Foreign Ministry addressed a strongly worded memorandum of protest to the Turkish Government today, noting that Turkish aircraft had shelled the villages of Banik, Shilan, Siyar, Suria, and Bigowa, and used napalm against civilians in these villages. The memorandum noted that initial press reports said at least five people were injured as a result of this barbaric bombing.

The Foreign Ministry, in its memorandum, asserted its strong protest of this flagrant violation of the territory of the Republic of Iraq, its sovereignty, and territorial integrity, which constitutes a clear violation of the UN Charter, rules of international law, and the Iraqi-Turkish Border Agreement of 1926.

The Foreign Ministry said that continued violations would considerably harm the good-neighborliness and cooperation between the Iraqi and Turkish peoples.

The memorandum added: As the ministry vigorously protests this blatant violation, it reserves Iraq's full right to take the measures appropriate under international law and the UN Charter against the infringement on its territorial integrity and national sovereignty.

The Foreign Ministry's memorandum renewed a demand for the Turkish authorities to immediately halt these violations to preserve the good-neighborliness between Iraq and Turkey and to avert the grave, negative consequences of their continuation.

Protest Sent to Perez de Cuellar

JN1410125291 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Iraq has protested the Turkish violation of Iraqi airspace on Friday and the bombardment of a number of Iraqi villages in the Hakkari region. In a letter to the UN secretary general, Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn stressed that Iraq reserves its full right to take the measure it deems fit in accordance with international law and the UN Charter. The following is the text of the foreign minister's letter:

His Excellency Javier Perez de Cuellar, secretary general of the United Nations, New York.

Your Excellency, I am honored to refer to Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's announcement in Ankara on 11 October 1991 that the Turkish aircraft carried out an air operation in northern Iraq on the morning of Friday, 11 October 1991, when eight Turkish warplanes crossed the Iraqi border south of Cukurca in the Hakkari region, penetrated Iraqi territory for 7 km, and bombed the Iraqi villages of Banik, Shilan, Siyar, Suria, and Bigowa, using napalm against civilians in these villages. Initial press reports said at least five persons were injured as a result of this barbaric bombardment.

This flagrant violation of the territory of the Republic of Iraq, its sovereignty, and territorial integrity constitute a clear violation of the UN Charter, rules of international law, and the Iraqi-Turkish border agreement of 1926. The continuation of these violations will also considerably harm the relations of goodneighborliness and cooperation between the Iraqi and Turkish peoples.

Your excellency, while recording the protest of the Republic of Iraq against this behavior, I would like to inform you that the Iraqi Government reserves its full right to take the appropriate measure in accordance with the international law and the UN Charter against the infringements on its territory and national sovereignty. While informing you of this blatant violation of the sovereignty and sanctity of Iraq's territory, we request that you intervene and take immediate measures that would put an end to these violations, which first and foremost harm the United Nations' credibility and its role of protecting the independence and territorial sovereignty of the member states.

We hope that this letter will be circulated as a Security Council document. Please accept our great appreciation.

[Signed] Ahmad Husayn, minister of foreign affairs, 13 October 1991

Barzani Statement on Turkish 'Aggression'

JN1210172891 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1635 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Statement issued by Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, on 12 October; place not given]

[Text] O struggling masses of Kurdistan: Yesterday, 11 October, planes of the Turkish regime carried out brutal raids against the complex of Bayguwah and the villages of Kilan, Surya, and Bashe, killing and injuring many innocent citizens. At 0900 today, 12 October, the planes returned and bombed for the second time the complex of [names indistinct] and the villages of [place-names indistinct] killing and injuring several other citizens. The aggression was carried out under the pretext that the PKK [Kurdish Workers Party] killed a number of Turkish soldiers on the border, in the region of [place-name indistinct].

We have never been responsible for the actions and policies of the PKK, nor have we been involved in Turkey's internal affairs. Moreover, the PKK has no offices in the named areas. This is a flagrant and premeditated aggression against the Kurdish people. It

would seem the Turkish Government has not appreciated the position of the people of Kurdistan, nor is it serious about good-neighborliness and noninterference in the other party's internal affairs, as previously discussed at the highest levels with the Turkish regime.

It is plainly evident that they harbor hatred toward the Kurds and Kurdistan. They cannot forget their enmity toward them. This is the second time such flagrant aggression has been perpetrated. We cannot keep our hands tied behind our backs, watching our women and children being killed. We therefore have decided to defend ourselves, and we have ordered all our forces to take the necessary measures to protect the souls and property of the citizens of Kurdistan. We can accept death, but we reject the aggression and tyranny of the aggressors.

We have asked the United Nations, the Security Council, and the big powers to help the people of Kurdistan. This will be the test of them and of others. Here, those who are really serious about the protection of the people of Kurdistan will appear.

[Signed] Mas'ud Barzani.

[Dated] 12 October 1991.

Kurds Said Ready To Resist

JN1410171591 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1635 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Excerpt] Party committees and peshmerga forces have announced their readiness to move to deter the Turkish regime's aggression and to protect the masses' lives and property.

Since the news of attacks by Turkish warplanes, and the call by struggler Mas'ud Barzani to the peshmerga forces to prepare themselves to protect the Kurdistan masses' lives and property, scores of cables and letters have been received from the party committees and the peshmerga forces in the [words indistinct] announcing they are fully prepared to resist and sacrifice to protect the Kurds and Kurdistan. [passage omitted]

Rebel Radio Reports 'Second' Turkish Air Attack

NC1410155091 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1420 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] For the second time our northern areas have been subjected to air attacks by Turkish warplanes which have bombarded several villages. Four fighter planes took part in the attack.

The air raid [words indistinct] carried out the day before this one [words indistinct] killed three and wounded 35. It has been ascertained by [word indistinct] of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan that napalm was used.

The spokesman of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan has condemned the Turkish air raid against the northern part of our homeland and appealed to the Turkish Government to stop such action.

Informed [word indistinct] abroad have reported that tyrant Saddam has allowed the Turkish Government to chase [words indistinct] inside Iraqi territories in return for letting his intelligence henchmen work inside Turkey, as agreed by the two sides in 1978.

Governor's Motorcade Attacked; Several Killed

NC1210155291 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1418 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] Our revolutionaries last week, carrying light weapons and hand grenades, attacked a Ba'thist motorcade carrying the governor of al-Basrah and his meek agents. Several of the motorcade members were killed and others, including the criminal governor's secretary, were injured, but the governor miraculously escaped the mujahidin.

The al-Basrah governor is regarded as one of the [word indistinct] members with dirty and stained hands in the service of the criminal Saddam, especially in chasing the sons of the blessed uprising of the month of Sha'ban [February-March 1991].

In another development, just punishment was inflicted upon the head of security of al-'Amarah Governorate after he fell in a humiliating fashion during a successful ambush by a group of mujahidin, thus eliminating his malicious crimes against our rebellious people.

UN Envoy Criticizes Recent Resolution

JN1210154891 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1510 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] The Security Council adopted a new repressive resolution last night. Most of the world's news agencies and major newspapers said that the resolution is unprecedented in terms of its brutality against a member state of the United Nations.

Ambassador Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, Iraq's permanent representative in New York, spoke at the beginning of the Security Council session before a vote was taken on the draft resolution. He said: This draft seems to be a procedural resolution, because it bypasses the objectives of Resolution No. 687 and maintains the economic blockade.

Dr. al-Anbari noted that the Security Council wants to make Iraq a hostage in the hands of one or two Council member nations, even though Iraq has fulfilled its commitments in accordance with Resolution No. 687. He said: Iraq gave a pledge not to produce or use weapons of mass destruction in accordance with the foreign minister's message to his excellency the UN secretary general, dated 18 April 1991, according to what appeared in this resolution.

Ambassador al-Anbari drew the attention of the Security Council members to the fact that the new draft resolution aims at strengthening the economic blockade. This is not in line with Resolution No. 687 or with the norms of international law, the Geneva conventions, and the UN Charter.

In its resolution, the Security Council adopted a plan for observation and monitoring measures to force Iraq not to produce or use weapons of mass destruction in the future.

Foreign Minister Reacts to Bush's Statements

JN1210145691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1430 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] United Nations, 12 Oct (INA)—Iraq has affirmed that the continued silence over the serious and abnormal statements by the President of the United States, and policies which are conflicting with the principles of the UN Charter and international law, will have grave consequences for world security and peace.

This came in a message which Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn sent to the president of the Security Council and which was published here as an official document. The foreign minister said in the message that the continued silence over American actions, which are being peddled through the channels of the international organization, will be considered as tacit participation in these acts if the Security Council members do not adopt clear stands regarding them.

The foreign minister said in his message:

I am honored to inform you of the text of the abnormal and serious statements made by the head of a state which occupies a permanent seat at the Security Council. At a press conference he held on 4 October, the President of the United States said: "I want to see Saddam Husayn out of power so that we may normalize our relations with the Iraqi people. This has always been my policy. Overthrowing him is in the interests of the United States. The blockade will continue and UN supervision over the marketing of Iraqi oil will also continue. Only food and medicine will be allowed to be imported by the Iraqi people."

The foreign minister added: These statements made by the President of the United States, which are officially documented, completely contradict the letter and spirit of the UN Charter.

While the Charter affirms that the Security Council should act in accordance with the objectives and principles of the United Nations, U.S. President George Bush continues to restate his policy openly in a way which contradicts these objectives. He also ignores his country's commitment, as a permanent member of the Security Council, not to interfere in the internal affairs of a sovereign state which is a founding member of the United Nations; this is a matter that threatens Iraq's security, safety, and independence.

The foreign minister explained that Paragraph 7, Article II of the UN Charter, states that "the Charter contains nothing to justify UN intervention in affairs that are essentially part of the internal authority of any state." Paragraph 2 of Article I also refers to "cordial relations among nations on the basis of respect for the principle of equal rights among peoples and the right by all to self-determination."

Ahmad Husayn expressed Iraq's regret that such serious statements by the leader of a large power and a permanent Security Council member were received with silence.

Silence over these policies, which publicly contradict the principles of the United Nations and international law, the minister said, will have dire consequences on world peace and security, which are the essential duties of the United Nations and the Security Council; let alone the fact that these policies, which the President of the United States officially adopts and announces through the mass media, constitute a rude departure from the Security Council resolutions. Indeed, they are an insult to the Council.

Ahmad Husayn said: Security Council Resolution 687 of 1991 did not give any country or side the right or authority to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs.

Therefore, the official position of the U.S. President clearly exceeds not only the aforementioned resolution, but also the other relevant resolutions, and it manipulates them into an instrument and tool to implement the suspect policies of the U.S. President.

The minister added: The Iraqi Government calls on you, and through you the other Security Council members, to shoulder your responsibilities in accordance with the UN Charter and international law; namely, to reject the U.S. President's humiliating violation of all international norms, conventions, and laws, and Security Council resolutions.

Concluding his letter, the foreign minister said: The U.S. President insists on interfering in Iraq's internal affairs, pursuant to a suspect policy seeking to subject Iraq and the Iraqi people to colonialist U.S. trusteeship, using means and methods not different from those of starvation and genocide.

Letter to UN Protests Fitzwater Remarks

JN1310122991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1135 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 Oct (INA)—Iraq has stressed its concern over White House Spokesman Marlin Fitzwater's remarks that the U.S. authorities are supplying Israel with information about Iraq, especially about the weapons of mass destruction.

In a letter to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar in this regard, Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn said that this explicit acknowledgement by the U.S. White House spokesman confirms, as we have frequently referred to in our letters, that the United States is using the Special Committee and the inspection teams as a cover for its espionage activities against Iraq.

Following is the text of the letter:

I have the honor to refer to our letter to you dated 6 October 1991 on the Israeli aircrafts' violation of Iraqi airspace on 4 October 1991 and the repercussions and reactions this violation of the airspace of Iraq and other Arab countries has drawn from various states.

In this regard, we should consider the remarks made by White House Spokesman Marlin Fitzwater on 9 October. He was cited as saying that the United States understands Israel's anxiety, however, he stressed that the U.S. authorities are supplying Israel with information about the alleged Iraqi danger, especially about the weapons of mass destruction.

This explicit acknowledgement by the White House spokesman that the U.S. Administration is passing information about Iraqi military secrets to Israel reveals what we have frequently referred to in our letters to you to the effect that the United States is using the Special Committee and the inspection teams as a cover for espionage activities against Iraq. We have also indicated that the information obtained by the U.S. Administration about Iraq's military secrets through the Special Committee and the inspection teams are being sent directly to Israel.

I would like in particular to draw your attention to our letter addressed to Your Excellency and dated 19 August 1991, in which I asked that Your Excellency provide me with affirmations that the information and pictures collected by U.S. U-2 spy planes would remain in the possession of the United Nations to serve the purposes of the Special Committee as stipulated in Security Council Resolution 687 of 1991. Regrettably, I have so far not received any such affirmation. The information and pictures collected by this aircraft, which is flown by a U.S. pilot and which takes off from a U.S. base in Saudi Arabia, do not constitute an independent source of information. The information and pictures first go to the United States and then to the side that Mr. Fitzwater specified in his statement.

Moreover, you are perhaps aware that in my letter to you, dated 2 October 1991, I voiced concern over the Special Committee employing mostly U.S. nationals as inspectors in its inspection teams at a time when everybody is aware that the United States insists on pursuing a tendentious policy hostile to Iraq. This letter followed revelations that David Kay, the head of the sixth nuclear inspection team, sent Iraqi documents directly to his superiors in Washington and not to the Special Committee, thus affirming Iraqi doubts that the U.S. Government uses the Special Committee and the United Nations as a cover for systematic espionage operations against Iraq.

Mr. Fitzwater's statement completes the chain of facts that confirm that the information, photographs, and documents collected by the Special Committee goes to Israel eventually, a fact that raises a serious threat to Iraq's national security and runs contrary to the role of the United Nations, which must give priority to protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its member states.

In light of the facts to which I have referred, and in light of the recent military and media escalation against Iraq, as demonstrated by the recent Israeli violation of the airspace of Iraq and other Arab states, we urge you to reconsider the measures and the conduct of the Special Committee to ensure that it does not go beyond the mandate given to it by Resolution 687 of 1991.

Such a review by you is an urgent matter, dictated by the need to preserve the credibility of the United Nations and its role as specified by the Charter, especially as regards respect for Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is also dictated by the requirements to maintain the region's security and stability.

We ask Your Excellency to ensure that this letter is distributed as a UN Security Council document.

With best regards.

[Signed] Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn.

[Dated] 12 October 1991.

Ramadan: 'Mother of Battles' Not To Be 'Last'

JN1110181491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 Oct 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 Oct (INA)—Mr. Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and vice president, has declared that the Mother of Battles against the United States, its allies, slaves, and agents in the Arab region, will not be the last one. The major success of the Arab nation against its enemies has been in learning the lessons and positive outcome of the Mother of Battles, which Iraq was honored to lead against over 30 nations, Ramadan added.

At a meeting with delegates to the popular forces conference, who this morning joined a march to the Presidential Palace, he said that if it were not for the fact that the treasonous rulers of Saudi Arabia provided the Holy land in Najd and Hejaz as bases to hit Iraq by air, land, and sea, the United States and its imperialist and Atlantic allies would not have been able to strike at Iraq so savagely. Ramadan indicated that the agent rulers paid out $160 billion so the United States could hit Iraq.

The blockade on Iraq—executed by subservient and agent regimes—is more an Arab and Islamic siege than a U.S. one, the vice president said. He noted that, supported by international law and charters and UN Security Council resolutions—including Resolution 687—Arab states can reject the embargo since the argument for passing the resolution has ceased to exist with the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

Taha Yasin Ramadan said the Mother of Battles has been one of the key battles of history during which major sacrifices were made and bright chapters written. The battle will outline the horizons of a united and systematic Arab struggle. The United States and its allies and agents in the region will be surprised by what the Arab masses will do in the way of revolutionary uprisings against all traitors and agents who betrayed Arab honor.

He stressed that history is made by striving, faithful people—who defend their rights—rather than by treasonous rulers who have put their thrones and personal interests before the interests of their people.

The vice president said that, led by His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, the Iraqis who prevailed in all the pan-Arab battles of honor, will adhere even more tenaciously to their Arab principles and values, knowing that they are fighting on behalf of the Arab nation, tradition, and strength.

Meanwhile, delegations and figures representing popular and professional and intellectual unions and parties attending the third Arab popular forces congress this morning set off on a march from the al-Rashid Hotel to the Presidential Palace. The slogans they shouted spoke of dedication to, and pride in, the unique, historic leadership of His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, and the preparedness of Arab masses across the Arab homeland to give freely to advance great Iraq's steadfastness.

The angry marchers denounced the unfair economic sanctions against Iraq and urged peace-loving forces around the world to stand by Iraq as it faces the ugly imperialist-American-Atlantic aggression.

'Aziz Says Regime 'To Fight With All Means'

JN1310211291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2029 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] Baghdad, 13 Oct (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, Revolution Command Council member and deputy prime minister, has asserted that Iraq has decided to oppose the unjust economic blockade imposed on it, to be patient and tolerant, and to oppose, maneuver, and fight with all means at its disposal so as to safeguard its independence and national identity.

Tariq 'Aziz added that the U.S. cannot pursue the blockade it is imposing on Iraq in the coming years. He made the remarks during his meeting with Arab journalists participating in the third conference of Arab popular forces, which concluded in Baghdad earlier today.

He added that the U.S. Administration might achieve some of the objectives it is seeking. We should not, however, deceive ourselves into believing that the U.S. power is absolute and can impose its control over all areas, even our region, because it will not be able to control our region.

He went on to say: America is now using, and wants to exploit, the results of the aggression against Iraq to the fullest degree. There are others who are launching psychological warfare so as to defeat us psychologically before doing that on the ground.

Tariq 'Aziz stressed that the Arab homeland has large potential for resistance, steadfastness, challenge, and progress.

The deputy prime minister warned: There are some who are telling us to lay down all the weapons we have, not to do anything, to listen to what the United States tells us, and to accept everything.

He added: By doing this, we would be serving the U.S. program without any effort on the part of the United States; that is, you are giving it achievements on a silver plate, and telling it: Go ahead, take charge of this area because we have decided to surrender.

The deputy prime minister affirmed that the U.S. can neither terminate the Palestinian intifadah nor stop the popular march in the Arab Maghreb. Nor can they suppress the nationalist movement in Egypt. He noted that the United States and its agents have means and capabilities, and that it can do many things and treat the Arabs cruelly, the way the colonialist British, French and Americans used to do. He said that anyone who thinks that history has stopped and that the American age has started is deluding himself.

He added that history was, and still is, for independence, freedom, and progress, and that history is still on the side of the Arab nation because it has undergone historic difficulties and contributed genuinely to the making of human history.

The deputy prime minister reviewed the struggle circumstances that the Arab nation has undergone throughout its historical epochs and the historical chapters recorded in several Arab countries to face the colonialist powers that established their hegemony over the Arab nation.

Saddam: We Can Live 20 Years Under Blockade

JN1310175191 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1705 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn has said that strength and weakness are manifestations of will, that will is a manifestation of faith, and that faith is the outcome of a discerning and knowledge of truth. He

added: When the nation discerns truth and knows it as it is, and when it shows faith in the course that it chose for itself, and makes persistent and sincere efforts to take this course, this will show that the nation is alive and strong, and also that its will is forceful and effective, and that its objectives are achievable.

His excellency the leader president went on to say: When you describe danger to some people, they might surrender; these are the weak. But when you describe danger to others, and show them the road to salvation, they adapt themselves in a manner that makes them capable of confronting danger.

These remarks were made when his excellency the leader president met members of the third conference of the Arab popular forces yesterday. In his statements to members of the conference, his excellency the leader president said: Each and every drop of blood shed by a martyr on Iraqi territory is a cause; each and every child deprived of baby milk is a cause; each and every old man who dies due to the shortage of medicines is a cause. Your nation was in need of a cause that is worthy of martyrdom. Likewise, it was in need of strength to resist injustice at such a level.

His excellency the leader president added: The slogan that the blockade on Iraq must be lifted should first be raised inside Arab and Islamic countries so that each citizen can demand a lifting of the blockade against Iraq in the country in which he lives. Such a slogan should not be directed at the United Nations. It should be directed at Arab rulers.

His excellency the president went on to say: Had it not been for Arab money, Bush would not have dared fire the first shot on Baghdad. Had it not been for Arab territory and Arab territorial waters, which were used as a theater for his operations, he would not have dared fire the first shot on Arab and Muslim Baghdad.

Addressing the audience, his excellency the leader president said: Your brothers in Iraq made immense sacrifices, however, they have no regrets at all. This is because they have faith in their battle.

His excellency the president added: Let it be clear to you that your country, Iraq, can live under the blockade for 20 years without asking anybody to give it anything. The blood shed in this dear corner of the nation must turn into torches of light to light the road for the nation's sons. Likewise, they must turn into torches of fire to burn the nation's enemies.

His excellency the leader president was received with a tempest of warm applause and chants for his life, the nation's life, and the people of Iraq. His excellency the leader president made his way with difficulty through the crowds of those present. Eyes were fixed on him, exuding happiness. Hands were also stretched from everywhere to touch his garments. Some speakers and poets from various Arab countries delivered welcoming speeches and poems, lavishing praise on the nation's glory and expressing love for the leader.

The reception ceremony was attended by Comrade 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, member of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command, and official in charge of foreign relations at the Regional Command; and Hamdan Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi, chief of the Presidential Office.

Saddam Has 'Historical' Dialogue With Ba'thists

CM0915095391 Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic 10 Oct 91 pp 2,3

[Text] Baghdad, 8 Oct—Today, on the anniversary of the confrontation of the anti-Arab tyrant 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim by an elite group of mujahidin from our great party, the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, President Saddam Husayn visited the scene of the heroic operation, where a statue of martyr 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghariri, who suffered martyrdom while performing the sacred pan-Arab duty against the tyrant, is erected.

Amid the masses' cheers, chants for his long life, applause, and songs, the president bestowed the al-Rafidayn Medal of the First Class, civilian type, and badges of valor on the statue of martyr 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghariri.

Yesterday, the president bestowed the al-Rafidayn medal and badges of valor on other comrades who took part with his excellency in this heroic operation. The operation was carried out on 7 October 1959 as an expression of the great Iraqi people's will and struggle against dictatorship, anti-Arabism, and the enemies of Arab unity.

The president and a number of comrades who took part with his excellency in executing the operation held an important historical dialogue. The dialogue constitutes an important part of Iraq's modern militant history and an important part of the history of the party and the national and pan-Arab movement.

Following is the first part of the dialogue. The remainder of the dialogue will be transmitted tomorrow.

President Saddam Husayn spoke during his visit to the site of the heroic operation and said:

Many happy returns. We wish our people continued prosperity. Two hours ago, 32 years had passed since a group of Ba'thist strugglers, some of whom died and others who are waiting to do so, abided by the decision of the command, which was the conscience of the people. Irrespective of all the philosophical interpretations, or the technical interpretations, this group, abiding by the decision of the command which, as I have said, was the conscience of the people, meted the judgment of justice against the head of the anti-Arab serpent, the head who led the course of atheism and deviation from the declared principles of the 14 July revolution. What was meant to happen happened.

We now thank God that he spared our lives to this day to record what meets His satisfaction. We appeal to God almighty to forgive us the mistakes which are recorded against us after He let us live until this date. He is the one one who is merciful, and compassionate.

Thus, I wish my comrades many happy returns. May God have mercy on our righteous martyrs, especially martyr 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghariri who fell at the very place where he meted the just punishment, the sentence of the people against 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim.

As far as I know, I am sure that not one of you, nor any of the Ba'thists, used to wonder while he was struggling, what future he would have and where he would be in the echelons of political life. I believe every one used to think that he was simply a Ba'thist in this march, the march of the Ba'th. As for the present, the strugglers, who still pursue their march within their party, now have big titles in political life, in society. We hope they will use these titles or deal with them only for the sake of principles.

Then, 32 years ago, seven young men who were experts in the field of fighting were charged with attacking 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim and his motorcade as it passed along al-Rashid Street, regardless of which direction it was coming from; from al-Mu'azzam Gate toward the al-Sharqi Gate or vice versa.

The codewords were: The word "Mahmud" if it were to come from the direction of al-Mu'azzam Gate, because it had the letter "M"; and "Shukri" if it came from the direction of al-Sharqi Gate, because it had the sound "Sh." The order was supposed to be conveyed via telephone to Dr. Hazim al-Bakri's clinic. Comrade Taha Yasin, may his soul rest in peace, would then pass the word to the hideout on the opposite side.

One evening, the codeword "Mahmud" arrived, meaning 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim was arriving in his car from the direction of al-Mu'azzam Gate toward al-Sharqi Gate. This direction was more difficult for us, because we had to cross the street with our arms, the side on which the motorcade was driving. Our hideout was across the street. If it had come from al-Sharqi Gate, it would have been easier because our hideout would be closer to the side on which the motorcade was travelling, and we could immediately assume positions for the attack.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Sir, the difficulty was two-fold. It was not only limited to the complicated attack, but also to our withdrawal. We were supposed to withdraw in the direction of al-Jumhuriyah Street. This meant we had to cross the street as we were engaging the enemy.

The leader president: Yes. I was charged with protecting the rear as we withdrew, or to cover the comrades as they withdrew. Was that not the case?

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Yes, sir. I remember when the shooting was over and we crossed the street, I met a citizen who was in panic. I asked him: Where to? He stood against the wall.

The leader president: Many people stood to the wall and put their hands up. I will not say anymore now, and I will wait for my turn to speak. I want to mention a few funny things, however. I remember it was the first time I ate Kraft cheese with watermelon. Many people in Baghdad may have had that kind of cheese before, including comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm and the late comrade Karim Shaykhali. We, your brothers from the rural areas, however, had not known that kind of cheese until that very moment.

Another funny thing, many people in Baghdad may have had canned food before, but it was the first time I ate canned food, canned beef. I had heard about that kind of meat. I had also seen some empty cans of beef, cans that had no labels.

I had seen those cans in the trenches British troops used in their battles against the Ottomans during World War I. Our teachers used to take us for short trips outside Tikrit. They would point to the trenches which the Turks and English used. We would find a few cans and the teachers would tell us that those cans were used to keep meat. We would lick our lips when the word meat was mentioned.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: Sir, about beef. Since comrade Karim al-Shaykhali and myself were from Baghdad, we used to claim we were civilized and we added eggs to beef. When he ate it for the first time, Hatim liked it.

The leader president: May God give the surviving strugglers a long life. The relationship among some of those strugglers did not change. Others pursued another political line. I do not think, however, that any of the strugglers involved in the operation pursued another political line, although some of them had committed mistakes or slightly deviated. But there is nothing in life that cannot be remedied.

Among the strugglers, the three of us have survived (the leader president, comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi, and Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz Najm).

We will pursue struggle within the ranks of the party. Comrade 'Ali Hasan is, of course, with us.

The leader president continued: Comrade 'Ali Hassun's task was to wait for us in his car at al-Jumhuriyah Street to drive us to the party hideout after accomplishing the mission.

I ask the comrades to pay attention. I will give them a chance to talk, and I hope that they will confirm the facts since they are alive. I wish them a long life. Sometimes, I read things written about this operation and I find gaps as a result of the long period that elapsed since this

operation took place. Therefore, facts must be documented by the people directly involved in the operation with a great degree of precision, and we must cooperate to record them.

The group of strugglers was made up of: The late martyr 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghariri, Saddam Husayn, Karim al-Shaykhali, Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi, Ahmad Taha al-'Azzuz, and Salim al-Zi'baq.

The leader president continued: The task of Salim al-Zi'baq was to intercept 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's motorcade with his car so as to give us a chance to shoot at the motorcade accurately.

Comrade Taha Yasin 'Ali, may God have mercy on him, was the one assigned to communicate the password to us. He was supposed to receive the password by telephone from Hazim al-Bakri's clinic to communicate it to our hideout.

I also mentioned that comrade 'Ali Hassun was the one assigned to take us from al-Jumhuriyah Street to our hideout after executing the operation.

Comrade Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi: Comrade 'Ali Hassun was not assigned a confrontation duty, though.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: It was a confrontation duty.

The leader president (in fun): This is not an important issue. But what I am going to say about you and Samir is much more important. Therefore, prepare yourselves right now. I have to make some comments in front of the Iraqis, and the truth of what I say is left up for them to decide. I will also make explanations, when necessary. Comrades: You can talk about me and my role the way you like.

His excellency added (laughing): I will not tempt you to speak, but it is your turn to speak.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: Sir, what you have mentioned concerning the writings on the operation is true. I have decided not to speak to anyone about it because it happened to me that I spoke to a magazine reporter once about the operation, and when I read what was published in the magazine, I found it was distorted.

Leader president: I remember that the Regional Command's representative assigned to supervise the operation was comrade Iyad 'Id Thabit. I also remember that when we returned to the hideout, we found comrades Hamid Ma'ri and Khalid 'Ali al-Salih there. Were there others?

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: I saw only those two, but I think there was a third one.

The leader president: I think there were only two.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Midhat Ibrahim Jum'ah used to frequent the hideout.

The leader president: He was not in the hideout when we returned there, and I remember that the two comrades that were standing at the door were Khalid 'Ali al-Salih and Hamid. I remember that Iyad was also there. Do you remember that he was there?

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: Perhaps he came two hours later.

The leader president: The moment we entered the hideout, Iyad was not there; he came later.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I remember that Khalid and Hamid were there. I took the latter's shirt because mine was stained with some of Samir's blood. I remember the shirt I took was short sleeved.

The leader president: And I took his trousers. (The leader president was shot in the leg during the operation)

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: Hamid Mar'i asked me why were we late. I told him the distance was long and I was willing to come through al-Shaykh 'Umar's street while Samir was insisting that I take him to the hospital.

The leader president: If you keep talking like this, 'Ali, you will make us miss the logical order of events.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: True, Sir.

The leader president: When you take your turn, tell us the story from the beginning, from the moment you received the party's order to the end. And try not to forget anything, 'Ali. Now it is comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm's turn to tell us what he remembers.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: At that time, I was a division command member.

The leader president: This was a high rank.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: This actually was one of the funny things at the trial. When al-Mahdawi (Fadil 'Abbas al-Mahdawi was chairman of the higher special military court) asked me about by position in the party, I told him that I was a division command member. He said surprisingly: No! How can one as young as you be a division member while I still am not a division commander? The man was mixed up between a party division and a military division.

The leader president: He thought you were a division commander.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: Yes. And when I told him that this is an organizational matter that concerns the party, he asked me how. I told him that there is a hierarchy in party cells, and he said: Your rank is equivalent to that of an army division commander. He insisted; he had a thick head, as it were.

Anyway, Sir, when the situation in the country started to deteriorate, and when the noose around the party's neck was being tightened, I was under the command of comrade Fadil al-Shahir. It seemed he was looking for

one or two comrades ready to participate in the operation. One day, I received a note from him in al-'Alawiyah, where there was a bourgeois restaurant called Twenty One.

The leader president (in fun): They were high class people. I heard about that restaurant at the time, and I learned that after the operation was discovered, no one frequented it.

Comrade Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi: I hope that comrade Samir will not forget the beef. They used to ask you and me, Sir, why we kept away and did not like the beef.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: Hatim did not eat, and Your Excellency did not eat the first time.

The leader president (in fun): I steered clear of it in the first time. I was determined not to eat that beef before I knew its story. Later, however, comrade Karim al-Shaykhali and I started eating that kind of meat after having it fried in fat and mixed with some eggs. Since then, we liked that dish and we wished to stay longer at the hideout so as to eat more.

Comrade Samir al-Najm (continuing): When my superior and I were discussing the situation, I felt that it was bad. I asked my superior how long the situation would continue, with our comrades in 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's prisons and jails. I asked if we couldn't find a solution.

Fadil asked me: What do you think is the solution?

I said: The solution is that four or five of our comrades go and kill him. He asked: Where can we find these people? Are you ready to do such a thing?

I said yes, I am ready. He noted that down without knowing whether I really meant it or not.

The leader president: He took you at your word.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: A week later, Fadil al-Shahir came to me to say that the party was thinking of such operation, and reminded me that I expressed readiness to participate.

The leader president: So, the party adopted your proposal.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: That is what he said. He asked if I was ready, and I said yes. A week later, I was invited to a meeting, and then a series of meetings began. In the first meeting, Iyad Sa'id Thabit and Midhat Ibrahim Jum'ah came to make sure I was really ready. I told them that there was a fedayeen operation for which I was ready; I said we had to attack 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. The hit squad had a number of options, one of which was to assassinate Qasim in Mar Yusuf Church, where he was scheduled to deliver a speech. This plan was later canceled because innocent people would certainly have been killed—something the party should avoid.

Other plans were studied until we finally agreed on the operation we are talking about. We rented a hideout under the guise of a lawyer's office. I continued to visit the place for three months. It was far from the apartment from which the operation was carried out, but it was in the same area. During the few days that preceded the attack, we met daily, sometimes leaving the place sadly because 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim did not pass through that street. Your excellency remembers that I made a wardrobe.

The leader president: To store weapons.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: I later made a similar wardrobe, and it is now in the Presidential Office. I ask his excellency's permission to move it to the same apartment. The first wardrobe had a secret compartment to store weapons in case they raided the apartment. The furniture was simple. The apartment had only that wardrobe, in which we put a shirt as a disguise. It also had two chairs and two floor seats. We used to sit on the floor most of the time, as you remember, sir. In addition, there was a table that could sometimes be used for writing, and I say could because it was worn-out, and we bought it for two or three dinars.

This was the furniture in the apartment we rented later. As you remember sir, the plan, in order to save time, was that comrade Taha would give a shout from downstairs instead of climbing to the apartment. After hearing his shout, we would climb downstairs with our machine guns under our shoulders, covered with jackets or pieces of cloth placed on the shoulders, as the Baghdadites sometimes do.

The leader president: We learned that from the people of Baghdad.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: But comrade Taha did not shout at us from downstairs. He came up and opened the apartment door. At that moment, 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim came from the eastern door. You, or comrade Karim shouted at him: What do you want?

The leader president: It was comrade Karim who shouted at him.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: Yes, he asked him: Has he come, and he answered, yes. We left the apartment one after another until all of us were in the street.

The leader president: Yes, we went down to the place.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: But 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's car had already passed that area.

The leader president: And that was the most difficult situation we had experienced.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: The question was how to find a way out?

The leader president: Let me interrupt you for a second to describe the condition of comrade Taha Yasin, may God have mercy on him. As I recall, comrade Taha came hurrying down a ladder from Hazim al-Bakri's clinic. He

then crossed the street and climbed up the hideout's ladder. He was almost out of breath, and surprised us by asking for a cigarette which he snatched from someone standing in the room. He then shouted: Is Shukri here?

His excellency added (laughing): We asked him: Shukri who?

Comrade Samir al-Najm: Yes, indeed, he asked: Is Shukri here?

The leader president: How can he ask us about Shukri, while he himself was with us in the apartment. Comrade Taha was supposed to shout when he was down the ladder. Then, comrade Karim shouted: Has he arrived? Comrade Taha, may God have mercy on him, answered: Yes, he has arrived. We immediately hurried down.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: When we noticed that the car had already passed past that area, each one of us tried to hide his weapon inside his clothes, and then we withdrew to the apartment. It was Providence that protected us at that moment because we could have been seen. There were six men running with machine guns under their clothes. One of our comrades stumbled and the butt of his machine gun was seen. I think he was comrade Hatim. When the first one of us reached the sidewalk, the motorcade had already passed, and there was no possibility of executing the operation. So we withdrew and stayed in the same hideout. It was God's will, and when God wills something, it must happen.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: I want to tell you this humorous story which does not affect the context in which I am recounting the serious events. The country folks, like yourself, Sir, and like comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi, knew how to use arms. But we Baghdad folks did not know how to use arms. We were only familiar with shape of pistols and machine guns. So, we asked that we be trained at least once or twice, so that we could at least hear the sound of bullets with our own ears, because anyone who did not hear the sound of bullets cannot possibly become a fighter. And this is a requirement of training soldiers.

The leader president: It is part of the training.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: Karim al-Shaykhali was good at using weapons. He used to explain some things to us, and I was fascinated by the way he used to dismantle a gun and put it together again. I had the impression, however, that he too had never tried shooting.

We went out once to practice shooting. We used a thorny plant of medium height as a target and attached several colored balloons to the top of it. Each one of us was supposed to aim at a balloon of a certain color. When any balloon exploded, everyone of us would claim he shot it. This was our first simple exercise. Shakir Hulaywah was with us at the time, because he had not left the group then.

The leader president: They did not know even how to choose their targets.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: What is worse than that, Sir, is that when we went out to practice shooting, we did not take anything with us that could be used as a target, like a can or a similar object, until we found that thorny plant. I do not actually recall if comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi was with us when we practiced shooting.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: The president and I went out twice to practice shooting.

The leader president (correcting him): I went out only once, but I do not remember any balloons.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Your Excellency: You went out twice, but not at the first time when they practiced shooting at the balloons.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: The second time, we took some stones and cans with us.

The leader president: We used paper once as a target.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: Yes, Sir, we once put up a newspaper on the thorny plant. It was better than the balloons. I repeat that, unlike the Baghdad folks, the people from the countryside and villages knew how to use arms.

The leader president: You mean the Baghdad people at that time, because now they are all expert marksmen.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: The second time, as Your Excellency probably recalls, we drove a yellow Chevrolet to practice, and the car broke down on our way back.

The leader president: Our guide was Abu-Tariq, Hashim al-'Amir, may God have mercy on him.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: I go back to the subject, Sir. The second time, four days later, the call was right. We went down to the street. On the second day of the first call we were watching the apartment from a distance, to know whether it was covered or not; we did not go inside. When we received the call, each of us carried his machine gun and went downstairs. We met Salim al-Zi'baq, God's mercy be on him. He was assigned to intercept 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's car with his car. But he found that his car was surrounded by other cars, and he forgot he had locked the key inside. He had to do two things at the same time.

The leader president: Since the key was inside the locked car, and the procession was approaching, he tried to break the car's windshield to get the key. We prevented him from doing this.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: We got engaged in a fast conversation, with every one talking to each other. The question was whether to retreat or attack, now that one of the elements—the condition of the car—did not go as planned. But when 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's car was within range, we all opened fire.

The leader president: This put an end to all discussions.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: Not all of us were firing in one direction. My task was to fire at the driver to stop 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's car.

For me, the implementation was easier than Salim al-Zi'baq intercepting the car. The difficulty, however, was that the firing was not flat: We crossed the street, and when I started to shoot, I was hit by fire from my comrades, as none of Qasim's companions fired at us.

The leader president: A policeman did fire.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: He fired later.

The leader president: It was a policeman who shot me; I saw him with my own eyes.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: This is true, Sir. And I also saw the policeman. You protected us when we withdrew. You were the last to withdraw, Sir.

I remember that the first to withdraw were 'Abd-al-Karim al-Shaykhali, then Ahmad Taha al-'Azzuz, and then myself. I was bleeding, and I told Karim I could not leave because I was hit, but he said: Come on, run.

The leader president: I was encouraging you.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: As I said, you were the last to leave, and I saw the policeman, a traffic warden, aiming at you. I fell back to the alley. The confusion was not because of the implementation.

The leader president: It was due to enthusiasm.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: Yes, the enthusiasm, and the comments that were made about withdrawing. 'Abd-al-Karim was for withdrawing. I supported him. But comrade 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghariri said: Let us carry out the job because we cannot withdraw, and certainly we were seen carrying weapons. Afterward, each one of us threw away his jacket and we started shooting. My machine gun was a Sterling with one magazine. I ran out of bullets and stopped. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Shaykhali was supposed to shoot and run, but he went further and said: I will strip 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim of his epaulets and cut off his ears and bring them to the party. Karim used to speak this way sometimes. But the important thing is that we withdrew on a different street than the one we were supposed to. There was a police station on that street, and two policemen were standing outside the door. But what helped us to cross without them noticing us is that it was already dark by that time, and the street was long and zigzagging. I remember 'Abd-al-Karim al-Shaykhali running and saying: "Oh my God, they shot the lone leader." He kept repeating that until we reached al-Jumhuriyah Street. That was the clever thing about him.

The leader president: That was part of the plan. We had agreed to repeat these words the moment we withdrew so that no one would suspect that we did it. We were ashamed of saying this, despite that it was part of the plan. But 'Abd-al-Karim al-Shaykhali said it.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: But when we reached the street, 'Ali Hassun's car was not there.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: The car was there, but I was not near it.

The leader president: The car was there, but 'Ali was not. So we started turning the car around.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: We waited for some time, and I was about to fall when I was helped by one of the comrades to enter the car.

The leader president: You were shouting: Send me to hospital.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: Yes, I did say that. I also said I will tell them that someone had hit me. But you shouted at me in a show of strength, determination, and alertness, and I clammed up.

The leader president: Some comrades wanted to send you to the hospital. But at that moment, I did not pay attention to party ranks because the issue was serious and told you that this is wrong.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: You shouted strongly: "Go to the hideout." 'Ali sympathized with me and wanted to drive back to the hospital.

The leader president: Let me help you remember well. When 'Ali was late and our situation was critical and you were shot and bleeding, we stopped a taxicab. I told the driver to stop; my machine gun was with me. He stopped, and I wanted to force him to drive us to the hideout, but at that moment 'Ali showed up and we let the taxi driver go, and returned to 'Ali's car.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: I remember that when we arrived at the hideout, I felt as if I were dying. I only wanted to know whether 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim was dead or alive.

When Qasim spoke, and it became clear that he had not been killed, I was very frustrated. One can die for a cause he believes in, but when he fails to fulfill his objectives, he feels frustrated and depressed. I remember that Your Excellency was wounded and that you asked one of the comrades to help remove the bullet. I was almost unconscious.

The leader president: Now it is comrade Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi's turn to speak.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: First of all, on this occasion, Sir, I wish you long life, God willing, so that you will continue to lead this homeland, which deserves sacrifices for its sake every moment.

When we joined the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, the first thing we thought of was that the Ba'thist is always ready for martyrdom for the sake of the party, the homeland, and the principles. We pray for God to help us keep this pledge and to preserve you as a leader of the march to achieve the goals in which we believe.

On this occasion, we remember our comrades, martyr 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghariri and the late Salim al-Zi'baq.

My superior in the party was martyr 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghariri. As young Ba'thists, we were discussing how to get rid of 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. We were not after authority, but we wanted to raise the pan-Arab voice and to change the course of our country's march, which was moving toward anti-Arab objectives. We sought to lead the July 1958 revolution on a pan-Arab course. There were many Arab nationalists, but they did not realize that the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, with its valuable ideas, principles, and slogans, would be the leader. There were other pan-Arab parties and movements, and we believed that getting rid of 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim was in itself a great achievement for the Iraqi people. My superior, Comrade 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghariri, was a division command member, as it became clear later.

We, the Ba'thists, did not know each other's ranks, and none of us tried to ask his superior about this. The late was perhaps a branch command member. He came to me one day and said the party had approved the ideas we were discussing and that I was chosen as a member of the team that would assassinate 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. I do not want to repeat what comrade Samir has already said. We were trained to carry out the operation the first time, before Your Excellency joined us.

I used to go to the countryside with comrade al-Ghariri to train in the use of arms. He did not take me the first time, saying he would train me very well later. He had a machine gun, and we used it in al-Mahmudiyah region.

The second and third times, Your Excellency and I joined the group for training in Jurf al-Sakhr region. Hashim al-'Amir was the one entrusted to find a training place through his relative Hilal Naji. Initially, the operation was to be carried out after staging the al-Shawwaf's revolution, but the date was then postponed indefinitely. They contacted us again, and we carried out the operation relying on God and enjoying the self-confidence Your Excellency talked about.

The leader president: When 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim executed the martyrs of the Mosul revolution, our decision to carry out the operation became final and irrevocable. We had no choice but to rid the people of 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's rule.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: What you have just said comprised the major reason behind replanning the operation and its execution. We devised a password to determine the road 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim would follow through the eastern gate and the al-Mu'azzam gate. We had hoped, as you mentioned, that he would use the eastern gate for two reasons: He would pass near our apartment and we would not have to cross to the other side. Thus, we would be directly on the sidewalk without anyone noticing us. This direction also leads to al-Jumhuriyah Street through a side street. The operation was not carried out the first time because comrade Taha came rushing to our apartment from that of Dr. Hazim al-Bakri. He was out of breath; it was noontime.

The leader president: Not to mention our situation at the time.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: The streets were empty, and the motorcade passed quickly.

The leader president: A chance at night was better.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Yes, it was better. One of the incidents during the operation is that I had placed my gun without its holster under my belt, and when we were running down the stairs, the gun fell and rolled against the stairs making a noise and drawing attention to us. Therefore, I picked it up. When we reached the street, the motorcade had already passed. The second time we did execute the operation; however, the first obstacle was the car of the late Salim al-Zi'baq. We met with him and discussed implementation of the plan. He returned to the car, but found that he had locked the ignition key in the car. This caused debate about the operation. The decision to execute the operation was instantaneous and immediate, so we started shooting. While we were discussing the issue, a passerby brushed against my machine gun. I shouted ouch! My hand! I pretended that my hand was in a cast and that I could not move it. The man scrutinized me for a while. Afterward, the execution began.

According to military standards, the operation was dangerous. It was carried out by civilian youths. The casualty rate was 50 percent. Three out of six of those who had undertaken the operation were injured, including Your Excellency. We did not withdraw to the side street that we had agreed upon. People accosted us and asked what had happened. We had our machine guns with us. Some of them thought that the army was shooting; they did not know what was happening. Some people were running and Karim al-Shaykhali was crying: "The leader has been hit." When we arrived at al-Jumhuriyah Street, comrade 'Ali Hassun was not there and the car was parked somewhat farther than the place we had agreed upon. I did not go with you to the hideout because I thought you were late and that you had left before I did. So I went to the house of a relative of mine in Mahallat al-Fadl [placename as received] and stayed there.

The leader president: Comrade Ahmad Taha al-'Azzuz did not go back with us to the hideout either. He came later.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: I went back to the hideout the next day, and his excellency was injured. Comrade Samir was also injured. Dr. Tahsin Mu'allah was treating him.

The leader president: We wanted to get the bullet out by using a knife. Comrade Ahmad Taha al-'Azzuz helped me to do this.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: I tried to hold your leg. I brought a knife and some water.

The leader president: After we arrived, Iyad Sa'id came. Khalid 'Ali al-Salih and Hamid Mar'i were also present at the house.

Everyone asked me to tell them what had happened during the operation. I briefed them on it and confirmed to them that 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim was dead. They asked me how I knew for sure. I told them that when I shot at him, I saw that my machine gun fire crossed with the fire coming from other machine guns over his head. I saw that clearly and closely. 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim was close to me, and when I shot at him, he put his hand over his head. This means that he was shot in the head. And, indeed, his hands were hit. It seems that his movement changed the direction of the fire and protected his head. He was rolling in the car. When the announcement was made, we listened to it. I then went to sleep. When I awoke at dawn, my leg was hurting a great deal, like thorns inside one's body. I know this from personal experience. When we used to walk barefoot, we sometimes stepped on thorns that would stick to our bodies causing severe pain, unlike the thorn that pricks but does not enter the body. That is why I knew that the bullet was still in my body, so I told my comrades not to wait for the doctor but to operate immediately.

We knew nothing; we could not differentiate veins from arteries or nerves. I said that we could use a knife to take the bullet out. Here the role of those from Baghdad came into play; they knew about such things. I asked if anyone knew how to open the wound so that I would not have to do it myself. Ahmad al-'Azzuz said that he would help me. He brought the knife and I told him how to make two cuts in my leg in the shape of a cross and to pull the bullet out with scissors like a truffle from the earth. When he caught hold of the bullet, I heard my heart beating strongly; I was partly unconscious and you were worried.

You were talking with me to divert my attention; you were patting my face, you poured some water on me, and you asked me if I could recognize things. Afterward, my condition improved. I now remember a funny thing. When director Odi [name as received] made the novel "The Long Days" into a film, he made his hero scream when a bullet was removed from his body. I contacted the comrade information minister and asked him: Why do you disgrace us like this? The truth is that I said nothing when the bullet was removed from my leg, right?

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Yes, sir.

The leader president: I closed my eyes for a while. I was unconscious for a little while, and then I jumped. Why does this film not give the truth? This is one of the humorous things about the subject.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: When we learned that the operation did not produce the desired results and that 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim was still alive, we waited to see what would happen next.

As Your Excellency knows, the plan was not confined to the assassination. The Ba'thist, patriotic, and nationalist officers were due to seize power. The assassination, in fact, was part of a revolution.

The leader president: In fact, it was the primary action.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: The assassination of Qasim was meant to be the zero point. It would have been followed by the military forces occupying Baghdad, including the radio station, and broadcasting the first communique. This was our understanding. But it would seem that when they realized that Qasim was not killed, they hesitated to implement the next chapters. And so we fled from the country, as it is known. The comrades who were not able to flee were arrested. Thank you, Sir.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: You remember, Sir, those long days when we used to stay in the apartment. We were discussing what would happen if the plan failed and whether the masses would view the party, in that case, as a gang of mercenaries.

The leader president: They would probably have said a gang, but not mercenaries. Who would pay for us!

Comrade Samir al-Najm: We were discussing this, and we tried to philosophize our role in the operation. We were against the assassination of individuals; but if that was part of a general plan for changing the society, then it was in line with the principles of the party. There were clear signs from Iyad Sa'id Thabit that there was an integrated plan and that the military organization would move to seize power.

There were signs that Najib al-Rabi'i would control the Defense Ministry. You remember, Sir, that we discussed those things as strugglers who cared about their reputation. We did not want to appear to be adventurists, killing a political leader for ideological or personal disagreements.

We used to discuss this for hours in that apartment. We wondered what would happen if the operation failed. We were really worried about the harm that would come to the party if the plan failed or if the following chapters were not carried out.

The leader president: The party gained more prestige in the eyes of the masses and the Armed Forces. Consequently, its military organization was further expanded. The reports we used to receive about the party while we were in Cairo heralded glad tidings. The masses flocked to join the party following the operation. Before it, there was a slow joining by the people of the party's civilian organs. I remember that I used to get annoyed at the repeated discussion of this issue by the command. Many used to pose questions that implied that the comrades were hesitating.

I remember that this was the only time in which I had asked that the discussion be ended, although as a party member I had no grounds to be annoyed by the continuation of the discussion.

The president leader then asks Comrade 'Ali Hassun to speak:

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: Mr. President, it is a historic day that we meet with you. I ask God to protect you and to grant you long life. Without you, we have no value. This is how we, the old comrades, feel toward you. We wish you long life, God willing.

The president leader: You have revealed your age and not mine. As for me, the Iraqis know how old I am.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I was not a party member, and I did not know whether you were a supporter or not. All that I knew is that I was a party member.

Leader president: By God, we did not know this. None of us knew of his position within the party. I remained unaware of this until I was unexpectedly called upon to be sworn in, when I was in Syria. I asked: What is the oath? What is it? They answered: It is the oath a Ba'thist takes when he becomes a party member. I told them: Had I died in the attempt on the life of 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim, I would have passed away without becoming a member.

That is it. Life has many tests in store for us. May God enrich the party's record of good deeds. It became clear to me that all this period and phase had tests for us. May God enrich the Ba'thist's record of good deeds. They have prepared us for the most difficult tests. They were sworn in only after they had passed these tests. Each of us knew that he belonged to the party. This used to be viewed as sufficient. He knew of his status within the party only when he was sworn in to become a member. Then, he read the Basic Law and knew where he stood within the party's hierarchy.

Second Part of Saddam's 'Dialogue'

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[Text] Baghdad, 9 Oct—A historical dialogue was held between President Saddam Husayn and a number of comrades who, along with his excellency, took part in confronting the tyrant 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. The dialogue is an important part of the modern militant history of Iraq, and of the history of the party and the national and pan-Arab movement.

President Saddam Husayn yesterday visited the scene of the party's heroic confrontation of the tyrant 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. At the site, a statue has been erected to the martyr 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Gharari, who suffered martyrdom while performing his pan-Arab duty against the tyrant 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim.

The following is the second part of President Saddam Husayn's dialogue.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: We were young and enthusiastic at that time. When the tripartite aggression against Egypt occurred, I became very active. I had Ba'thist friends. Bear in mind that I used work at ice factories, and that I never went to school. When they spoke to me about the objectives of the party, I immediately agreed to join it, while my brother hesitated and declined. They did not admit anyone to the party without finding out about him and his family. I used to drive a truck to distribute ice. Then, I used it to distribute leaflets. Later, I was summoned to work at the hideout without a salary, and this I accepted. My duty was to distribute leaflets. I stayed at the hideout for some time. Then, they asked me to buy a car. I had only 90 dinars. They gave me 100 dinars. I managed to buy a Ford in installments, and I paid the money as a first installment. The rest of the amount was divided into monthly installments of 25 dinars each. The total price of the car was 600 dinars.

The leader president: It was a large amount at that time. 'Ali, you must have been rich. We did not know that.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I began to use the car, and we moved to another hideout behind al-Kuwaiti building. It is the hideout to which I drove your excellency.

I used to move between this hideout and the printing hideout where Safa 'Anjur used to work and print.

The leader president: Safa 'Anjur, remembered for his good deeds, is now a comrade in the party.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: He is the member of a section, I believe. One day, some women came in as guests and he was held up inside.

After some time, I told them I did not have any money to pay the installments for the car since my work was to transport documents or weapons. Khalid 'Ali Salih told me: We will give you the installments. He told me: Go to al-A'zamiyah. You will find Nu'man there. He will give you something which you will bring to us. He gave me a basket with weapons inside and told me to be careful. A number of popular resistance men were guarding the streets.

I placed the machine guns beside me in the front of the car. They were covered with blankets. When they asked me what was inside the basket, I told them foodstuffs that I had bought for the house.

Khalid was honest with me the next morning, after the martyrs were executed, God bless their souls, in Mosul. I was very badly hurt over that incident and said that I would hit 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim with my car. He told me not to do that. We had a special operation planned for 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim, in which we would strike him and get rid of him. We would not only strike him, but will declare it a revolution.

They came to see me at the set time at al-Jumhuriyah Street. I was told that this was my place, opposite the alley. The one who brought me to this place was Khalid 'Ali al-Salih. Salim al-Zi'baq, God bless his soul, and I transported the weapons to the hideout. One evening,

while I was on guard, I heard a loud bang. I was waiting for Iyad Sa'id Thabit to tell me what happened. Since I was far away, I went back.

The leader president: You were in the cafe drinking tea.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I was not in the cafe, since I could not go there because the situation was very grave.

The leader president: Comrade 'Ali is denying it to us for fear of the party, because, at that time, the party terrorized the people by punishing them.

If one of us was isolated from the party, he would die. He has denied the story of drinking tea; the truth is that the cafe was nearby and he really wanted a cup of tea, so he went there.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: My lord, true, that cafe was there and I used to sit in it every day; I did not sit there at that time, however, since it was nighttime then. I came running to the car and found you standing beside it, but did not find Iyad.

The leader president: I did not abuse you, but shouted at you.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: Yes. God forbid the mistake, you only shouted.

I turned the car around and Samir sat next to me while you and al-Shaykhali sat in the back seat. After driving for a while, there was a traffic jam in front of me. That is when I crossed over to the other side. A policeman standing there cursed me and spat at me.

The leader president: Yes, and you created a problem for us.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I told him: Abu-Isma'il, please help me. I have a patient with me, and you can see how heavy the traffic is.

While Samir was unaware of anything, you, sir, were aware of everything. When Samir insisted that I go to the hospital, I told him that I would take him to the hospital. Hence, I proceeded toward Bab al-Mu'azzam.

Leader president: You had strong convictions about the issue. You wanted to go to the hospital. The late Karim al-Shaykhali endorsed this version of the story, and said: Let us go to the hospital. Then, I nudged you from the back and asked you to head toward the hideout. You were resting in the backyard and were ready.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I still remember you when you were talking with Karim, while Samir was moaning with pain. I asked about the person we had killed. I asked: Did we kill an ordinary person or a head of state? How then could we go to the hospital? Then, you told me: 'Ali, proceed to the hideout. But Karim told you: Wait, comrade. When we arrived at the hideout, I found two or three persons standing at the gate. Of these persons, I remember Khalid 'Ali al-Salih and Hamid Mir'i. I do not know whether there was anybody else. I am sure of this because Hamid Mir'i's life depended on me. If I didn't arrive, he would starve to death. And because he was a Syrian, he was afraid of venturing outside. He did not know places in Baghdad. I used to take him to Yusra when she left for the place where her fiance was. He loved me very much. When we entered, you put down your weapons, and one of them shouted at me, saying: Why are you late?

Leader president: We did not put down our weapons. Say that we put them aside. Yes, when we entered the hideout, we thought it advisable to conceal and cover our weapons.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: When we entered the hideout and got out Samir, who had sustained an arm wound, I did not know that you were also wounded. This is for history. I knew nothing about this at the time. I saw blood, however, much of which was on me. I stayed at the hideout. When I said to Khalid, I will leave right now, he answered me by saying: How can you leave while the body of the car is dented? I took off my shirt and and put on the short-sleeved robe brought to me by Hamid Mir'i. Mir'i also gave me linen, which I used to cover the blood. I then left for the Tall Muhammad area, where my house was.

When I arrived at the gate of my house, I washed the blood off the car. Some people who know me, including Falih, came and began to ask me about the group's situation. I told them that the group members were fine and at the hideout. They knew that I would go to the hideout.

After a while, the statement on the attack on 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim was broadcast. I asked the owner of a nearby shop about what had happened. He said that 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim had been attacked. In the morning, I left for the hideout and parked the car far away in 52 Street. Khalid 'Ali al-Salih asked me: Why did you come? You should not have come. From now on, I will see you outside the hideout. Your Excellency, I saw you sleeping, while Samir was groaning in pain.

Leader president: Samir was sitting on a stone bench with his chest bare.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: He asked me to bring him a grilled chicken, and when Hamid enquired, I told him I was going to bring Samir a chicken.

Ahmad al-'Azzuz, Khalid 'Ali al-Salih, Hamid Mar'i, your excellency, and Samir were also present. I remember that when I saw your injury, I asked: Is our comrade wounded too? They said: Yes, he was wounded in the leg. You said: I want surgery to take the bullet out of my leg. We brought cotton and a shaving knife from upstairs.

Leader president: I was not in need of that, was I? I only demanded that the knife be heated and sterilized. You told me it was okay, and I asked you to bring me iodine for sterilization.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: Yes, you are right. We did not find iodine.

Leader president: No, we found iodine, and you assured me that the knife was new. I thought that one of you had used it to shave his beard. Therefore, I demanded that it be heated.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: When they opened the wound, you fainted. Bin-Ahmad shouted and asked me for water, which I brought in a bowl. Hamid Mar'i and Khalid 'Ali al-Salih could not look at the operation. I and Ahmad Taha al-'Azzuz remained at your side, and I tried to hold your legs. You then blamed me and asked me what I was doing upstairs. I answered that I was looking for iodine.

Leader president: The operation was a minor one, and I heard what you were saying but was unable to answer you. You could call it a brief coma.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: You regained consciousness after the bullet was removed. We then bandaged the wound and you asked me to go to al-A'zamiyah. I did not know what was there. But when I arrived, entered the cafe, and the people there saw me and turned their faces, I told Khalid that I would run away before they recognized me. He told me not to run away.

Leader president: They must have known that you were connected with the issue.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: They did not recognize me but I was afraid they would.

Leader president: So, you had a mental picture of this?

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I believed this. I stayed in al-Karadah for three or four days, using my car for work. I was unable to go home to find out what was going on, why 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim did not die, to know about the Army units which they said would be deployed on the streets, and of our fate. About that time, traffic policemen came and took me, along with the car, to the isolation department in Bab al-Mu'azzam. They took me upstairs and began to interrogate me. I told them: May you live for a long time. What do you want from me? May God protect the leader. They asked me: Where were you when the leader was attacked? I told them: With my folks. They said: How can you prove this? Go and bring witnesses. They sent two policemen with me to the house. From my neighborhood, I brought two persons, one of whom was the late Faruq, and the other, whose name I do not remember, was from Samarra'. They had seen me near the house. They swore on the Koran that I was at home before 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim was attacked. Therefore, I was released immediately. It was a long night, the dawn of which I awaited impatiently to see Khalid 'Ali al-Salih. When I saw him, I told him the story and informed him that they had arrested and interrogated me.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: How could you go to him while you were being watched?

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I went on foot, without using the car. He told me: Get yourself any job. We will not mention your name, even if the noose comes to our necks. You saved yourself, and nobody will know about you. I asked for his approval for me to flee and head northward, but he refused, saying: By so doing, you would make both you and us suspects. I began to see Khalid 'Ali al-Salih outside the hideout, because he ordered me not to come to the hideout. He said that we had to meet at a cafe on al-Nidal Street, a cafe you used to frequent. After a while, policemen stopped me in front of my house, and opened the door in the company of Hulaywah's son.

Leader president: By the way, what about his whereabouts?

Comrade Samir al-Najm: He is working at a commercial store in al-Shurijah.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I said: What happened? They asked: Do you know this person? I said: I do not know him. He said: No, 'Ali. Nothing has happened. Go to Fu'ad al-Rikabi's home, and nothing will happen to you. I answered by saying: I know neither Fu'ad al-Rikabi, nor his home. They took me to the cavalry company for interrogation. I attempted to flee and staged a hunger strike.

Leader president: Because you know that your cause is great rather than trivial.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: Jokingly, comrades used to blow things out of proportion. Three days later, the cavalry company was surrounded by many cars and a group of military discipline personnel climbed aboard three or four trucks. I asked what was going on. They said: We want 'Ali Hassun. They took me. I was pained, and told myself that this would be the end for me.

Leader president: When death comes, we must depend on God.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: We have faith in God, but fear is a human trait.

They took me to Karaghuh. I knew the staircase that leads to it, and the staircase that leads to al-Jiddah. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Jiddah, military discipline commanding officer and one of 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's supporters. He was killed during the 8 February 1963 revolution. When he saw me, he laughed and said: Is this 'Ali Hassun? I said: Yes sir, and I am a poor person who only seeks God's satisfaction. He said: Did you not bring him before? They answered: Yes sir. He said: Come, who are you, and how did you carry them? I said: Sir, I carried nothing, and I do not know what you are talking about. A group of people were sitting near him. He turned around and said to Samir: Is this not 'Ali Hassun? Surprised, I said: Samir. So, he said: Come here, how do you know Samir? Did you not say that you do not know them? Then how do you know Samir?

Later, they put me in a room in the camp. They did not give me a blanket or anything. Some soldiers, however, took pity on me and gave me a light blanket. In the morning, they took me to the courtyard to find out who attacked 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. There were many people. Your excellency, please listen to this story.

They looked at our faces. Among them was Khalid 'Ali al-Salih. From among us, they took out those poor ones who did not take part in the operation. I stood behind Khalid 'Ali al-Salih. Khalid told me: Do not confess. I told him: I will not confess. At noon, they took us inside and al-Jiddah tortured us. I had heard of flogging before, but I had never seen it. That day, I saw blood drip from me. They tortured me every now and then, and said: Confess! But I answered: Confess to what? And I said nothing.

Al-Jiddah summoned me at night. I told the interrogator that the group told me that they had things for me to carry, and that they threatened me so I could not do anything. This is all I said. When I told Khalid of what I said at the interrogation, he said: Why did you say that? Did you not place all the blame on Midhat by doing so? I told him: I do not know Midhat. You are the one who brought me, and why are you afraid and want to blame Midhat?

Leader president: Considering that he was outside Iraq.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I told him, why did you not tell me?

Leader president: Did Khalid not confess?

Comrade Samir al-Najm: He confessed later.

Leader president: Yes, circumstances were difficult, because some deliberations took place. Samih was injured and they arrested him.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: The hideout was rented in the name of Shakir Hulaywah. We did not know that Shakir brought them to the hideout and they arrested us. They started torturing us to find out the truth. I made a statement in which I accused two or three fictitious people. The statement must be documented somewhere.

Shakir Hulaywah was outside the organization and when Karim al-Jiddah read the statement, he relaxed. I signed the statement and they gave me an apple. I thought to myself that we should sacrifice one of our own. Why should we all die? He then took the papers and went to another room. When he came back, I glimpsed Shakir Hulaywah telling him that the participants were so-and-so and so-and-so. I was one of them.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: Shakir Hulaywah did not know that I was with you. Concentration was on him regarding the hideout of Fu'ad al-Rikabi.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: How can Shakir not know the story. He participated in the operation and he gave them all the names. He told the inspector that my version of events was fictitious.

The real story goes like this ... Here, the treatment became different since the testimony was clear, the confession was clear, and the group is before us. The late 'Abd-al-Wahhab is one of the comrades.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: There were some other people with us whom they accused, before accusing us, of attacking 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. They confessed to that. I know one of them, who is related to 'Abd-al-Wahhab. There were six of them, I believe, one of whom was a military man who died, God bless his soul.

Leader president: He died while being tortured, didn't he?

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: No. He was murdered afterward.

Leader president: I mean under torture, they admitted they were the ones who attacked 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. There was another group apart from us who claimed they had attacked 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim so that they would not be tortured.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: They were with me in apartment no. 1, but Hulaywah said: These are not the ones. He pointed to us and said: These are the ones who did it.

The leader president: Was Shakir Hulaywah punished by the party and kept away from the operation?

Comrade Samir al-Najm: He was kept out of the operation because he had traveled to Syria to establish contact with the late Michel 'Aflaq and complain to him about the state of the party. He wanted to complain about his being kept out and punished, and so forth. But he was arrested at the border because he was not carrying a passport. This is his story. When we were in detention together, I asked him why he had done that. He answered: I was furious with the party and with every Ba'thist. I wanted to destroy the party.

I told him: You know us all and we have friendly and humanitarian relations with you. He said: I went crazy and wanted to destroy the party because I did not have my chance. I believe he wanted to be a member of a section command. He did not have the chance to do so and was kept out of the operation.

Leader president: When he was forbidden from taking part in the operation, he thought they doubted him. Is that not true? I did not know him, but I saw him after the Ramadan revolution.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: He was accused of crossing the border and of being a smuggler. He told them: No, this is not true. I know about that operation, and he brought them to the hideout. We saw him in the second car when they surrounded the hideout. We later learned that the hideout was his, but we did not know that for a fact. One

day. Amid Mar'i and I told Iyad that we had remained too long in the hideout and that it was better for us to move from there.

He said: I am looking for a hideout in al-A'zamiyah to be close to my mother. When we voiced our desire again, he said: Why are you so frightened? Are you the only ones who will be executed? We were pained at what he said, and we did not repeat our request until we were arrested.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: I have something to say about comrade 'Ali Hassun. We were abroad and we did not attend the investigation. When the personality of martyr 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghurayri was recognized, orders were issued that his relatives and friends be arrested, including myself, because he, may God have mercy on him, was my cousin. There were also orders that martyr Muthanna, Mun'im Quddus, and about 20 others of his relatives be arrested.

The leader president: By the way, how is Mun'im Quddus?

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: He works in his farm. That was the first group. It was made up of 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Ghurayri, martyr Muthanna, Mun'im Quddus, Khalid al-Dayi', and a number of our relatives. A plan of confessions was prepared for them. Each one of them would be asked to define his position according to the plan. It was enough for any one of them to be convicted when he placed a certain mark in the right place of the plan, as a result of torture. In fact, these people had nothing to do with the operation, although they were Ba'thists and strugglers. They were the ones mentioned by comrade 'Ali Hassun.

The leader president: The investigation committee, set up to investigate the attack against the first man in the country, had documents and one of the martyrs who fell during the operation. It wanted to succeed in that mission at any cost. That made it force other people to admit that they took part in the operation so that it could tell people that it had uncovered the perpetrators.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: After they knew and sentenced the real perpetrators, they did not free the others. Instead, they charged that those people knew about the operation from me or from 'Abd-al-Wahhab. However, they did not tell the authorities of that fact. As a result, they were sentenced to prison terms ranging from two to three years. In fact, they knew nothing about the issue.

Leader president: They did not correct the verdict?

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: They did not correct the verdict. They also leveled other charges against them, that the perpetrators were their relatives and that they certainly had told them, but that they in their turn did not communicate what they knew to the authorities.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I knew Mun'im Quddus in prison no. 1 when they tortured me with flogging. He was in the same room with me. I was in great pain and when darkness fell I became restless and wished that I were dead. I wanted to commit suicide to escape from my situation. Ordinary torture used to relieve me, and it really relieved me. But to be hung from the ceiling was real torture to me. When they hung me one day I tried to look for a source of electricity to kill myself. You can ask Mun'im Quddus, as he is still alive.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: Sir, to be hung from the ceiling is very harsh. Sha'lan Jum'ah was with me in the room while I was hanging from the ceiling. I asked him for a razor blade, giving him the excuse that I wanted to trim my nails with it. He was a simple peasant and believed me. He tried to bring me a razor blade from some communists who were in the room next to our cell. But after he found out why I wanted it, he told me: I see that you want to commit suicide. I told him: Just find me a razor blade. I was in great pain and suffering from a hemorrhage because the bullet took a very strange course. The bullet had hit my shoulder, passed through to my chest and was lodged in one of my lungs. I do not know how this happened.

Leader president: The bullet changes course when it hits more solid ground and gets deflected to softer areas. For example, I was hit in a bone which did not fracture. The bullet changed course and once again entered muscle.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: I told them that Khalid came and told me that he had something he wanted me to take. Ibn al-Jiddah told me: Spit on him. I told him: My mouth is dry, how can I spit on him? Ibn al-Jiddah cursed me. Then they took Khalid away and gave me an apple. I was distressed at his weakness and gave him the apple. One of them who saw what happened told them what took place. They cursed me and told me: Why did you give Khalid the apple? I told them: Are we not Muslims? He is weak and deserves to be helped.

They sent me back to prison no. 1 and arranged us in seven groups for trial. When they called our names, lawyer Khalid al-Dayi' told me after giving me an Arab headdress: Go to court and let's see what will happen. History will record your names. We will die and be forgotten while your names will not be forgotten.

Leader president: He did well. He gave you energy.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: We went to court, My Lord, and the people still talk about our trials.

Leader president: We were very happy while we were there in Cairo. In one way or another, I managed to split the court.

There was a peasant man whose name was Muhammad. He couldn't read or write. Every time he came across a medicine tablet he would swallow it. When asked why, he would answer that he will undoubtedly come across some sickness along the way which will be cured. Hatim was the same. Whenever someone was sick and they gave him medicine, he would take some of it himself.

There are numerous stories of this kind about Hatim al-'Azzawi. But you can delete whatever you want from

what I have said, Hatim. I wanted to ask Samir about the other issue. We represented the peasant class in the operation. 'Ali's role was to represent the working class. What was your opinion of us at the beginning? Please tell it as it is Samir.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: The city-dwellers consider themselves shrewd, as is said, while the countryside is where people are really cunning and shrewd. After a while, we felt as if the country folk didn't take us seriously.

Leader president (jokingly): They set things up along what is called militias and on the basis that they are special forces carrying their machine guns. We do not know this business of militias. We shoot at the target directly.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: When we first met, My Lord, one of the comrades carried a gun and a number of hand grenades. I asked for a gun, apart from the machine gun, because one might need a gun. The comrade I asked to give me a gun screamed at me and asked me why I needed it since I already had a machine gun. When we sat on one side, the comrades were talking about certain dishes and foods. One of them mentioned the word beef, the meaning of which we did not know. We looked at each other waiting for him to explain the meaning of the word. One day, you told that comrade: Dear brother, one day you will die and it will die with you. Since you will die carrying four hand grenades, a machine gun, and a gun, and since there is a possibility for your death, why don't you give your comrade some weapons. Personally, I did not want to take his gun away from him. He supervised the operation along with us. I intended for him to bring me the gun from the hideout or from the command, because weapons were very limited in number.

Leader president: Those with pistols and a machine gun were few.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Yes. Afterward they brought us the gun because we asked for it.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: That wasn't there.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: They brought it in afterward.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: They brought us two Sten guns and two Sterlings.

Leader president: I took the Sten gun. His excellency said jokingly: We, the lower classes that is, as they called us, received our share at the very end. In other words, they gave us the weapons nobody else wanted since our party ranks were low and we were country folk.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: No Sir. The levels within the party were not really mentioned.

Leader president: He is saying this as a joke.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: We had two Beretta rifles among our weapons. They were too long to be hidden under a jacket, so we had to remove their butts.

Leader president: The Beretta-11 rifle Karim was carrying was awesome.

Comrade Samir al-Najm: To Samir, the best weapons were a pistol, a hand grenade, and a machine gun.

Leader president: Neither Karim's rifle nor Hatim's rifle were used. We faced this problem in Cairo. Hatim used to mourn and cry every day because his rifle was out of order. When I asked him why he wept, he answered: Why did my rifle not work? What would we do if his rifle did not work. As we became friends and sat together I asked him: Did not you try to open fire on 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim? He answered: Yes, but my rifle did not work. I said: What would we do if it did not work? Why do you imagine that you did not play your role because your rifle did not work? You played your role most courageously. So why do you cry every day because your rifle did not work?

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Sir, it was not my gun. During the operation, my gun was taken and I was given another machine gun. I did not know who did that. I felt I was persecuted because the machine gun they gave me was less effective.

Leader president: So, you thought that was the case.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: It was a source of sorrow for me.

Leader president: We suffered much from that. Well, what do the mass media want from us?

Comrade 'Abd-a-Jabbar Muhsin: If you allow me, Sir, there are some matters. Your people will hear this conversation, and we feel there are some outstanding questions. It seems that the "Long Days," as a movie and a book did not answer some questions because it stripped events of their social dimension.

The first question: If you did not enjoy full membership of the party, why were you tasked with carrying out such a duty?

Leader president: The operation needed secrecy and sacrifice because it was not easy, and it was comrade Ahmad Taha al-'Azzuz who named me for that operation.

I am talking about the comrades who participated as comrades-in-arms and in war at that time. They were all comrades in the war, regardless of their present situation and whether they are inside or outside the party. Ahmad Taha al-'Azzuz met me in prison in 1959 but I do not remember the exact period. I think he remembers it. He believed that Saddam Husayn was suitable for that mission.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: Had the party entrusted you with combat missions of this kind before this operation?

The leader president: The party had not given me such missions previously, but that was due to the position I occupied in the party. I used to travel to visit my parents in al-'Awjah during the summer holidays. I asked my responsible official about my duties during that period, and he told me that I would receive them after I had returned from my holidays. I saw this as something quite burdensome since the holidays were very long and the break from the party was likewise long.

I remember that we did not know how to write slogans at that time. The organization was as powerful and as real as steel. Membership in it stemmed from complete conviction; secret service was not based on coercion but on full conviction. Through a remark I made, I informed the official that I had not seen any party slogans in Tikrit, and I wanted some slogans to be written. I asked whether there was anything that prevented my writing them on the walls myself. He said that there was nothing to prevent this. He wrote down some slogans for me. I went on my own, taking a can of paint and a brush with me. Utilizing the logic of my weapon, I started walking around Tikrit.

In some of the older parts of Tikrit, you could still find signs of green paint on the walls. I wrote out all the slogans which the official had written down for me on a piece of paper. I also wrote some others on the walls of the police station.

This incident might have been an indication, but my official did not know about this operation. Perhaps he deduced the results later on. After that, they broke off my direct contacts with my official in the region; my contacts were established directly with Comrade Taha al-'Azzuz since he, as I understood it later, was the one who had nominated me for this operation.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: Sir, your courage is well known among the Iraqis and the sons of the Arab nation and the world. You performed the operation and confronted death in two ways. First, you were among the major elements entrusted with the duty of protecting the assassination group as they carried out their operation. This meant that Your Excellency was the one who stayed until the end. Therefore, the chances that you would be exposed to death, God forbid, were greater than for the others. Even the chances of your being arrested were greater because you, Your Excellency, were responsible for covering their retreat until they could get somewhere safe or to the street or to a waiting car. You confronted death once again after the operation had failed. You stayed in Iraq a bit longer while you were wounded. The operation against the president took place at that time. The death sentence was carried out against some elements which had not been involved in the operation, or in anything like it. Could we learn about or explore Your Excellency's feelings while you were going through these difficult circumstances?

The leader president: For historical reference, I am discussing details which have already been recorded. I do not know whether these tapes are still available at the Ministry of Information or not. As for our situation, we did our duty at that time and our deeds are recorded. The comrades have discussed the details of the direct operation without discussing other issues and developments except through fleeting remarks. Your comrades can enlighten you on anything you wish to know later. I cannot remember the details of my role precisely. I was entrusted with the task of protecting the rear of the retreat from the scene. In other words, I was actually the last to retreat and leave the area. In the original plan of operation, however, I was not asked to shoot and then protect the pullback, is not that so, comrade Hatim? My role was to observe the situation and be prepared to strike back and protect the comrades when the others started shooting at the car directly. I had to be the last to withdraw; that is, to fight back and then withdraw after everyone else had left.

But when the car passed in front of me, and the first comrade started to fire at it, I immediately started to fire as well. I believe that comrade Samir or martyr 'Abd-al-Wahhab, may God's mercy be upon him, was the first to fire. Comrade Samir can confirm this. When 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's car drove in front of me, I fired; I continued to fire, moving toward the car. The distance was so short that we could actually have hit each other. But at the same time, I behaved as instructed by the leadership; I was assigned to protect the withdrawal. I finally withdrew and joined the comrades. Comrade Samir was wounded in the chest; he was bleeding and comrade Karim and I were encouraging him. Comrade Karim was the first to withdraw, followed by Samir. I was the last to leave, until we all got to the car. I also remember that Ahmad Taha was assigned to throw a smoke bomb or some sort of defensive bomb, but it was not thrown, or perhaps it was thrown but did not explode.

I think that comrade Karim was carrying a bomb to use when the car's doors opened. Of course, the plan was not implemented in its entirety, which is natural. This was absolutely not due to a lack of courage. None of the comrades cared for or thought about his life.

Our chief concern was to serve the nation and to rid it of tyranny and serious deviation. The leadership said that the operation was part of a plan for change. The operation was explained to us, and we were convinced. Even if the aim was only to rid the people of the head of deviation, then the operation, for us at that time, would still have been convincing and justified.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: Did you participate, Sir, in the discussions about the operation in the hideout?

The leader president: Of course, they explained the plan to us, and we gave our opinions.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: I mean, Sir, the theoretical discussions of the assassination as part of a plan to change the system?

The leader president: In fact, I was not involved in the philosophical aspects of the subject. I used to listen much more than talk, right, comrade Hatim? I understood that the comrades were trained and notified before I was. I was, therefore, cautious. I did not want them to misunderstand me as questioning our role in the operation. I listened more than I talked, but when there was an important subject, I would give my opinion as necessary.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: Sir, did you not give even a slight hint about this subject to your honorable family?

The leader president: No one learned about this matter at all until I arrived home. I read an article in the newspapers today in which there was incorrect information; however, it was a good attempt to deal with this topic. The writer of the article says that my uncle, Khayrallah [father of late Defense Minister 'Adnan], is the one who tried to learn about what had happened. The one who actually tried to find out was my uncle, Comrade 'Abd- al-Latif Tulfah, may God's mercy be upon him, because he saw me with his own eyes; however, I denied it.

My uncle 'Abd-al-Latif Tulfah received medical treatment at the clinic of Dr. Hazim al-Bakri, who was a friend of my uncle Haj Khayrallah Tulfah. 'Abd-al-Latif accidentally saw me wearing his personal jacket. I chose his jacket because it was long and could hide the machine gun.

When I saw my uncle 'Abd-al-Latif, he asked me: Has he died? I said: Who is he? He said: 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. I answered: How should I know? He said: Why are you denying the incident when I saw you with my own eyes wearing my jacket?

My uncle added that he had been seeing the doctor to treat his teeth when the shooting took place. He looked at the street and saw the machine gun in my hand while I was under an apartment in the street shooting at 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. I told him: Okay. That is enough. If you want to help me, would you bring me some sulfur to treat the wounds. He helped me. Otherwise, I could have faced difficulty in getting medicine.

The important thing is that until 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim was hit, until I returned home, and until the first intervention took place, no one in the family knew about this operation. I did not tell even [late Defense Minister] 'Adnan about this, but we had spoken about the importance of getting rid of 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim. We had discussed this within this framework only. I was concerned that no one in my family should know about this operation in the future, particularly my uncle's family.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: Sir, when you left the operational area, you were 100 percent sure that 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim was killed; otherwise, you would not have left the place. Is this correct?

The leader president: Exactly. This was my belief. With regard to what you have mentioned about leaving the scene, I cannot tell you about it now.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: This means that there was no pressure on you to leave.

The leader president: We carried out our duty and fired all the bullets we had at 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim's head. And this is what happened; after carrying out our duty, we left the place.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: Sir, there was no force in the street other than a policeman.

The leader president: No. There was no mentionable intervention greater than our ability to confront it.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: The car stopped.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: And the car behind it.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: No. He was alone.

The leader president: As far as I remember, he was alone and unguarded on that day.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: Yes. He was alone.

The leader president: The driver and bodyguard were sitting in the front seat and he was sitting in the back. On every other day, he would drive by with the guards behind him.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: There was another car behind his car.

The leader president (interrupting): According to the allocation of duties, there was someone who would shoot at the car while the others would fire at the guards. But the shots were concentrated on the first car, which means that the second car was not directly behind it, or at least that we did not get any resistence.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: Sir, you heard the news about the failure of the assassination attempt and that 'Abd-al-Karim was still alive when you were in the hideout. Did you suffer from a feeling of desperation or regret because you did not finish the operation properly?

The leader president: It is only natural that we hoped that the operation would proceed as planned.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: In other words, was there any feeling of blame among the comrades who carried out the operation?

The leader president: No. There was nothing of the sort and all the comrades remember that.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: We did feel sad and we regretted that the operation had not achieved the results we had hoped for.

The leader president: There was some feeling of this kind among us. This was due to the fact that the comrade who was supposed to throw the grenade inside the car did not do so. He was expected to open fire, but he didn't. I do not believe that he hesitated, but that it was the atmosphere of being a youth; in other words, we were not murderers. We were not a gang, but youths employed by the revolutionary party. We were young guys. Some of us were still students in our first year of college; another had already gotten his secondary school certificate. I was in my last year of secondary school and moving on. Comrade Samir was in the first year of college. Comrade Karim al-Shaykhali was a student at college, and so was Salim.

Comrade 'Ali Hassun: The eldest among us was the deceased 'Abd-al-Wahhab. He had a university degree.

The leader president: In other words, the only comrade who had a university degree was the deceased 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghariri. I do not believe that Ahmad Taha al-'Azzuz was in school. By this I mean to highlight that we were all young and approximately similar ages. The oldest among us was Comrade Ahmad Taha al-'Azzuz.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Azihaz: Comrades Ahmad, Karim, and the deceased 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Ghariri were the oldest among us.

The leader president: They were the oldest while the rest of us were of comparable ages.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: Sir, were your comrades not worried that you were participating in the operation while still a young man? Did they know that you were able to do it?

The leader president: They thought that I was a good man; a strong man. Right?

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: I mean your age, Sir.

The leader president: Our ages were suitable; we were young, with recently-grown moustaches.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: You were about 21, because you were born in 1937.

The leader president: Yes.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: Your Excellency was born in 1937, so the three of us are the same age.

The leader president: You have solved the problem.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: Sir, what happened after the bullet was removed from your leg?

The leader president: This is a long story, like that of comrade 'Ali Hassun.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: Tell us only how you left the hideout.

The leader president: In the hideout, I stressed the need for us to leave the place and to keep only comrade Samir there until we found a better place for him. I said that someone should look after him but should not stay with him in the hideout. I suggested that this person watch the hideout from a distance. If he saw an abnormal movement, then he would not enter; but if nothing extraordinary was happening, he could enter the hideout to look after Samir and supply him with food and meet his other needs. I was of the opinion that no one should stay in the hideout, and that we leave it early in the morning. I did not wait for anything. In the morning, having had the bullet removed from my leg and my wound dressed, I asked permission to leave. I was out in the street. I took a taxi home. I tried to walk normally, bearing the pain, and pretending that I was alright.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Your Excellency and I agreed on the subject of the hideout.

The leader president: You said you felt that the hideout was being watched.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Because when I left the hideout, I saw a woman near the wall; she was looking inside. I returned and told you that the hideout was under surveillance, that I personally would not return to it, and that we all should leave it quickly. Your Excellency agreed at once.

The leader president: I had proposed this to the comrades before you arrived. My idea was that everyone should move out of the hideout, leaving some comrades to take turns looking after comrade Samir. But these comrades, including the one treating comrade Samir, would stay with him only for short periods as necessary. Apart from that, they would stay out of the building, watching the hideout from a distance and entering the place only at intervals so as not to attract attention. After that, I left the hideout, and people know the rest of the story.

Comrade Samir 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Najm: Your Excellency, we have burdened you, but this is a dear occasion due to your presence with us, God willing. We wish you a long life to lead our Iraq from one victory to another. This meeting is part of the great history of the party, as well as Iraq's history. We are proud that you are one of our comrades and that you have become our leader. God willing, these roots will continue to grow at least as far as this group is concerned, and we will eagerly defend them. Two or three days ago, I told comrade Hatim that we would like to have tea with the president on this occasion. Your Excellency, you have responded in a very nice way beyond our simple wishes.

Your Excellency, we wish you every success. God willing, we will always remain your soldiers.

The leader president: May God protect you and bless you. God willing, you will always serve your people, your comrades, and your nation. You and your struggling comrades within the Ba'th party and the people will remain faithful soldiers, God willing, to the great principles which are the object of pride for Iraq and the nation. May God protect you.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Sir, on this occasion, we pledge to you that we will remain loyal comrades. As we joined you in the first revolutionary operation of our history when we were young, God willing, we will keep the same spirit and continue to give support under your leadership. With the revolutionary spirit of the Ba'thists, we will resist aggression, the blockade, and the attempt to strip Iraq and the nation of this spirit. The struggle stage you lead, which is very difficult, will become a faith that we, our sons, and our grandsons after us will pursue. We will overcome the blockade, God willing, with the same principles, spirit of struggle, sacrifice, and loyalty to the nation, to the Arab homeland, and to great Iraq.

Through your leadership, all conspiracies and aggression will be foiled. All the attempts by the evil ones to cut Iraq down to size and to harm it will be thwarted, God willing. The banner of Iraq and of the Arab nation will remain high under your leadership through its sons and knights. My comrades share this pledge with me. God willing, we will manage to honor it. Thank you, Sir.

The leader president: May God's greeting be upon you, comrades. Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin, so as not to say that I did not answer some of your questions: You asked about my psychological situation. Whoever says that I was never scared is saying that I did not put myself in all circumstances and situations—regardless of the nature of the danger, regardless of who is deserving and who is not, a person does not risk his life without consideration—this never happens with anyone. There is faith and a sense of embarrassment, however, which is at the level of faith. In order to avoid embarrassment, a person chooses not to retreat. There is also faith. Ba'th is not easy for those affiliated with it. Those affiliated with Ba'th must realize that their mothers gave birth to them for the nation, not for their families, because their families are part of the nation; they are not isolated. At any rate, we did not hesitate to face circumstances. This is the explanation I can give to you.

Comrade Hatim al-'Azzawi: Sir, with regard to the linkage of which you have spoken, the linkage between embarrassment and faith. I do not imagine that either one alone can be found in a person. Both exist together.

Comrade 'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin: Sir, on this issue, during the al-Qadisiyah battles you waged, during your visit to the front, amid battles, and during what recently happened at the mother of battles, I cannot but describe you as al-Mutanabbi [ancient Arab poet] has said: You stood up defying death and other heroes were defeated while your face continued to shine with a smile.

The leader president: May God bless you. We have become members of a leadership. The issue is no longer as I have mentioned. I spoke of Saddam Husayn the young man who took part in carrying out the task with his friends in Baghdad.

Upcoming Baker Visit Spurs Activity, Comment

Cabinet Deliberates on Assurances

TA1310120591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Report by political correspondent Jack Katzenell at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem]

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Shamir told the cabinet that the United States has agreed not to use the expression territories for peace in the document it is to furnish Israel and the Arab participants in the regional conference. Shamir said the Americans also accept the concept of different interpretations of UN Resolution 242 and that there should be no preconditions to the talks, but these U.S. assurances are far from satisfying Israel as Secretary Baker's decisive visit to the region begins.

In a letter to Baker, Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein made six proposals—for example, that the U.S. document should stipulate that the aim of the talks is a contractual peace, and that Israel's security interests in the Golan Heights should be acknowledged.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1100 GMT on 13 October in a similar report by political correspondent Natan Gutman adds: "Foreign Minister David Levi provided a long political review of his visit to the United States, and there was a short debate on the U.S. letter of assurances. It was agreed that the entire cabinet would hear the contents of the letter before it is presented for endorsement by the Government of Israel."]

Foreign Minister David Levi told the cabinet that Israel's settlement activity in the territories continues in spite of what he called the American dictate.

Science and Energy Minister Yuval Ne'eman acknowledged that though the activity in the existing settlements is impressive, but he said that the establishment of new settlements should continue at the same pace. Ne'eman asked Attorney General Yosef Harish about the issue he is checking in connection with the City of David settlement. The attorney general said he is not looking into the security aspects of the case, merely whether Jews do in fact have the right to move into houses to which they have ownership or some other kind of lease. Ne'eman said he is astonished that this is an issue at all, and so did Ari'el Sharon.

Police Minister Roni Milo submitted to the cabinet a detailed proposal for tightening up the conditions under which Arabs from the territories can enter Israel. This is in the wake of last Friday's terrorist attack at Tel Aviv. Basically, as you know, there are Arabs from the territories who have green cards, who are regarded as high risk and are already forbidden to enter Israel, and apparently the categories are going to be expanded. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1100 GMT on 13 October adds that "Minister Rehav'am Ze'evi demanded that the Arabs from the territories be banned from entering Israel and that military prosecutors be instructed to demand the death penalty for terrorist murderers."]

Levi Briefs Cabinet

TA1310154891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister David Levi today briefed the cabinet on his visit to the United States and his meetings at the UN General Assembly. Levi described his talks with U.S. Secretary of State Baker, who is due in Israel on Wednesday, as frank.

The foreign minister said that there is an understanding between Israel and the United States on fundamental issues. Levi asserted that the Americans had expressed understanding for Israel's rejection of the demand to freeze settlements. When you stand firm on your positions, you can succeed in changing things, Levi said. [passage omitted]

Levi also reported that Israel had resumed talks with Germany on loan guarantees for construction efforts. [passage omitted]

'Reservations' on Assurances

TA1510072791 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 15 Oct 91 pp 1, 2

[Report by Dan Avidan, Hemi Shalev, and Mikhal Sela']

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] On the eve of Secretary of State Baker's arrival in Jerusalem, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's aides are exacerbating the tone of their remarks, noting that Israeli participation in the peace conference is not at all certain at this point.

Sources in the prime minister's bureau said last night that the U.S. letter of assurances lacks several "basic elements," the omission of which is liable to delay the Israeli reply to the invitation to a conference. The sources said that Shamir had made it clear to Baker that Israel's participation depends not only on an acceptable resolution of the Palestinian representation issue, but also on the presentation of assurances acceptable to Israel. It will be noted that yesterday Foreign Minister David Levi spoke in positive terms of the U.S. letter of assurances, although he noted that several issues still needed to be hashed out.

Yesterday Israel conveyed to Baker, via the State Department, its reservations about the U.S. letter of assurances. Israel demands, among other things, that the United States state its objection to Israel's return to the 1967 borders; express explicit objection to the establishment of a Palestinian state; determine that the purpose of the process is to attain "peace contracts;" and define

the opening conference as a mere ceremonial event leading to direct bilateral negotiations.

Figures in the prime minister's bureau firmly condemned the "indirect negotiations" Baker has been conducting with the PLO through the Palestinian representatives from the territories. They warned that if the discussions in Amman make the existence of these negotiations public knowledge, Israel will not hesitate to boycott the peace conference.

It should be noted that political sources believe that while the harsh remarks reflect the growing mistrust between Jerusalem and Washington, they also represent pressure tactics expected to obtain more flexible formulations in the U.S. letter of assurances. Administration sources pointed out yesterday that it was highly doubtful that Baker would agree to introduce significant amendments to the letter of assurances. The political sources believe that Israel will go to the conference even if the letter of assurances does not meet its demands, provided Baker contrives to remove obstacles created by the Palestinians.

The Palestinians are adhering to their demand that their delegation include a representative from East Jerusalem, although they are willing to replace such a representative with Hanan 'Ashrawi, who resides in Ramallah. Israel, however, will not agree to 'Ashrawi's participation, both because she has held direct talks with the PLO, and because of a more important factor—the fact that she is a resident of Jerusalem.

Political sources yesterday revealed some of the names on the list on which Palestinians are currently working and which will be presented to Israel on Thursday. They include Mustafa al-Natshah from Hebron, Ilyas Frayj from Bethlehem, Zakariya al-Agha from Gaza, Ibrahim Abu-Sittah from Gaza, and Ghassan al-Shak'ah from Nabulus. The Palestinians are also persisting in their demand to be allowed to hold independent negotiations with Israel on interim arrangements. For that purpose, they are preparing a "complementary list" of delegates who will join the Palestinian component of the joint delegation with Jordan. The augmented team will conduct the direct negotiations with Israel. [passage omitted]

Yesterday in Jerusalem there were growing signs that Boris Pankin will not declare the resumption of relations with Israel during his stay here. The prevailing opinion, based on various reports, is that Pankin will announce that the Soviet Union intends to resume relations at a certain date before the peace conference opening. Some of the reports received yesterday point to continuous disagreements in top Soviet echelons with regard to the timing of the resumption of ties with Israel. [passage omitted]

Leaders 'Satisfied' With New Assurances

TA1310204591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 2030 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] Israel is satisfied with the newly formulated letter of assurances relayed by the United States to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir last Saturday. This was stated today by a source close to Foreign Minister David Levi.

The source told ITIM that Israel takes a very positive view of the new formulation, which no longer mentions the U.S. position on the three controversial issues: U.S. interpretation of the UN resolutions, the issues of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, and the composition of the Palestinian delegation.

Israel is pleased that the letter makes no reference to Washington's refusal to recognize the annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. On the issue of the Palestinian delegation, the letter states that Israel does not have to sit at the negotiating table with representatives to whom it objects.

Problems With All Main Points of Letter

TA1410060491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Report by political correspondent Arye Golan]

[Text] The most recent draft of the letter of assurances received in Jerusalem still includes clauses seen as problematic by the Israeli Government. All the remaining controversial issues will be discussed on Thursday in Jerusalem between Shamir, Levi, and Arens and the U.S. secretary of state.

The controversial issues include a phrase proposed by Baker, saying that the United States does not support the establishment of a Palestinian state. Jerusalem is not ready to settle for this lukewarm phrasing and is demanding positive wording stating explicitly that the United States objects to the establishment of a Palestinian state. The Americans have so far refused to make such a commitment, and negotiations on this point are continuing.

Political sources involved in contacts with the United States said this morning that, in fact, unresolved problems remain with all the central issues contained in the letter of assurances. This includes the Palestinian delegation's composition and its modus operandi, conference procedures, understandings regarding the Golan Heights, and the demand that the goal of direct negotiations be defined as the signing of peace contracts between Israel and the Arab countries.

At the same time, the U.S. proposal no longer includes a clause speaking of territories for peace, and does include an acknowledgement of different interpretations of Resolution 242, as demanded by Israel.

Will the conference be held in The Hague? Perhaps, but this has not been officially confirmed, sources in Jerusalem have said. Will it last four days, as reported yesterday? Not true, Jerusalem sources are saying today. What are the delegations to do with four days on their hands in The Hague or Lausanne, when there is a U.S. promise that the purpose of the conference's opening ceremony is to allow speeches, not negotiations?

Only later this week, when Baker reappears at the gates of the Prime Minister's Office, will various points become clearer.

Attendance at Talks No Certainty

TA1510054991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 15 Oct 91

[Report by political correspondent Arye Golan]

[Text] This morning, a little more than a day before the U.S. secretary of state is scheduled to land in Israel, Jerusalem is full of concern, doubt, disappointment, and ponderings. This was how one of the cabinet ministers, who is also a member of the Inner Cabinet, defined the situation and the mood. There is no 100 percent certainty that Israel will attend the conference if several of the questions we presented are not answered in a positive manner by the United States. Although Israel intends to participate in the peace conference, it will not go if the composition of the Palestinian delegation, for example, will contravene the agreements reached in the past that the PLO will not be a partner, or if the letter of assurances does not include an explicit clause that was also agreed upon in the past, that the direct negotiations are meant to lead to the signing of peace agreements between Israel and the Arab countries. Israel also opposes the presentation of any preconditions by Syria before the negotiations start.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir also attributes great importance to the resumption of full diplomatic relations between Israel and the USSR prior to the convening of the conference. Sources in Jerusalem stress that this was also part of the agreements and understandings that were reached between Israel and the United States before Israel said yes to Baker. Therefore, this is another way to examine the erosion and backtracking in the U.S. promises that has caused an uncomfortable mood in Jerusalem. The U.S. pressure could lead to a weakening of Israel, one of the ministers said recently, and the weakening of Israel makes peace more remote. The Arab mentality is such that if the Arab countries feel that Israel is weakening, they will show no flexibility or moderation but rather the contrary.

The assessments and feelings here have led to a sense of tense anticipation prior to the eighth round, and perhaps not the last, of Secretary of State Baker's talks in Jerusalem.

Levi Hopes for Solution by Weekend

TA1410154291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi conferred today with a delegation representing Jewish communities in the United States with whom he discussed the state of Israeli-U.S. relations and progress in the peace process.

I hope that by the end of the week we will manage to overcome our differences and that the way will be cleared to hold the regional conference, in the wake of which direct peace negotiations will be held, Levi said. Afterward, talking to reporters, the foreign minister described the current state of the negotiations.

[Begin Levi recording] We are currently trying to achieve the maximum positive results for Israel. It is our initiative, and we are advancing it. We are sure of ourselves. There are sometimes differences of opinion, but we will overcome them, and the important thing is to continue to deal with the remaining issues, overcome them, and push the process forward. [end recording]

Jerusalem is currently working on an answer to the draft letter of assurances transmitted by the Americans yesterday. This is the foreign minister's response to the contents of the U.S. letter.

[Begin Levi recording] It contains many positive points. There are points that we will continue to work out together with the secretary and his team. We will do everything to achieve the most and best possible. [end recording]

In his meeting with the Jewish representatives, Minister Levi also called on them to continue international pressure on Syria until it permits its Jews to leave the country. It is inconceivable for them to remain the hostages of a repressive regime, Levi said.

Pressure 'Liable To Weaken Israel'

TA1410132691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister David Levi says that U.S. pressure is liable to weaken Israel, which will in turn mean that peace is more remote. In a meeting with representatives of Jewish American communities, Minister Levi said that the Arab mentality is such that if the Arab countries feel that Israel is weakening, they will show no flexibility or moderation. [passage omitted]

On Simultaneous Baker, Pankin Visits

TA1410174391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister David Levi by political correspondent Arye Golan on 14 October—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Golan] The U.S. and Soviet foreign ministers will be both here together on Thursday. How do you understand this? What is your interpretation of the unprecedented phenomenon of the presence of the representatives of both superpowers? Is this meant to exert pressure, or what?

[Levi] I can only ask if this is also a disaster? Should we also bemoan this? There were times when people were asking where is the secretary of state? Why does he not come here? As for the Soviet foreign minister, it was clear that he would not arrive. Today not only are they arriving but they are coming together. Therefore, we should have confidence in ourselves, receive them warmly, and discuss things with them.

We are not made of pliant dough, which anyone can fashion as he sees fit. We are strengthening our relations with many countries, arguing when necessary, and furthering our interests as required—with the United States, with the USSR, with Europe, with the PRC, with Asia, Africa, and any other place. Let the two foreign ministers come. Their agenda here has already been prepared. We shall receive them, discuss things with them, and promote our interests together with them.

Issues on Agenda for Baker Talks

TA1310071591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] The U.S. secretary of state is leaving for the Middle East, intending to settle all the issues. The matter of Palestinian representation is not yet final, but several compromises are becoming apparent. One of the offers raised in the Palestinians' talks in Washington was that the conference be attended by a resident of al-'Ayzariya or Abu-Dis. The residents of those villages do not carry East Jerusalem ID cards, but before 1967 the villages were part of Jordanian Jerusalem.

Israel believes that the Arab countries have been pressuring the Palestinians to show flexibility on the issue of representation to allow the conference to go forward. The Arab countries made it clear to the PLO that they will go to the conference, with or without the Palestinians.

Sources in Israel noted four major issues that will be raised in Baker's talks in Jerusalem: The first, naturally, is the letter of assurances, which Israel says must include several substantive points, including a definition of the goal of the talks as peace agreements between Israel and its neighbors.

The second issue is Palestinian representation. Two other issues on which Israel will ask for clarifications are the conditions for the conference, and the way the bilateral negotiations will be held after it.

Those issues have recently gained importance in view of reports coming from Washington that the United States intends to continue the conference beyond the two days previously agreed upon. There is also uncertainty in Israel concerning the bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Arab countries. It is not clear when exactly they will start, and Israel wants this matter firmly clarified during Baker's visit here. Jerusalem stresses that Israel believes the most important part is the direct bilateral negotiation, and not the ceremonial part of the conference.

Concerning the Syrian declaration that it will not attend the multilateral negotiations, political sources said they regret the Syrian stand, but Israel will attend the conference nevertheless.

Baker To Choose Delegates From List

TA1110183791 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 11 Oct 91

[Text] Our correspondent has learned from informed sources that a number of Palestinian academicians and political thinkers recently raised the concept of setting up a consultative council for the PLO comprising some personalities and thinkers from the occupied territories and abroad. The task of this council will be to discuss the political ideas and scenarios during the negotiations at the prospective peace conference. This council will also represent the authority of the negotiating Palestinian delegation in the conference from the political, legal, and technical aspects.

Informed sources in East Jerusalem told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that Secretary of State James Baker has asked the Palestinian delegation now in Washington to go to Jordan to begin coordinating with Jordan on the formation of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. These sources added that the departure of the Palestinian figures to Jordan for this purpose hinges on achieving tangible and real progress in the talks with Baker. These sources added that the members of the Palestinian delegation submitted to James Baker a list containing the names of 20 Palestinian personalities from which he will choose the names of the members of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations.

Levi on 17 U.S. Assurances

TA1510142391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 15 Oct 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi this morning briefed the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee about the series of assurances agreed upon with the United States. Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen reports that 17 points were agreed on. One of the assurances says that the purpose of the negotiations is the attainment of a peace accord. It is also agreed that the United States will not force Israel into a dialogue with the PLO. The Palestinians who will attend the talks will be residents of the territories who accept the path the United States is

offering for the talks. The Americans also announced that they do not support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

The assurances also state that the United States is renewing its 1975 commitment that speaks of the importance of the Golan Heights from a security point of view, and that it is willing to guarantee the border to be agreed on by Israel and Syria.

Foreign Minister David Levi also told the Knesset committee that Israel will not be an obstacle to convening the conference. He believes that the conference will convene for two days in Europe and that direct negotiations between the parties will then start.

Shamir on Baker Visit, Syrian Weapons

TA1110183191 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 11 Oct 91

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Shlomo Ganor at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem on 11 October—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Excerpt] [Ganor] Mr. Prime Minister, the U.S. secretary of state is expected here next week. What should we expect? Will the peace conference get on the road?

[Shamir] Well, this is his eighth visit since the peace process began. Some people hope that this will be his last visit before the start of the negotiations. After he arrives and departs, we will know if this is indeed the case.

[Ganor] Should we expect the invitations to be distributed at the end of his visit?

[Shamir] That is possible, although we have no definitive information on this matter.

[Ganor] What about the Palestinian delegation or the Palestinian component of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation? Does the United States better understand our positions?

[Shamir] I assume that it is aware of our positions. Our position is very clear, and I do not think that it will go back on the agreements we reached together.

[Ganor] Mr. Prime Minister, what is your opinion regarding the possibility that Syria will not take part in the regional discussions?

[Shamir] Well, there have been such reports. We still do not know whether this is true or not. Perhaps we shall hear from the secretary of state about this matter. At any rate, this is unacceptable to us.

[Ganor] What if Syria refuses to take part in the regional conference? What will be Israel's position then?

[Shamir] We will then have to discuss matters and decide.

[Ganor] Mr. Prime Minister, there are reports about increasing Syrian efforts to procure sophisticated arms. How does this comply with its aspirations for peace?

[Shamir] That is really a very serious question. It is difficult to accept such a weapons procurement effort while preparations are under way for peace negotiations. This is a stark contradiction.

[Ganor] Does it point to any intentions beyond that? Will Israel demand the end of U.S. weapons sales?

[Shamir] It certainly does not indicate a sincere desire for peace. We will discuss all the other matters in the course of negotiations. [passage omitted]

Arens on Conference, Overflights

TA1310160991 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens in the Jerusalem studio by Dan Shilon—live]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Shilon] In two or three weeks, the peace conference will be convened. On the basis of all the information you possess, can you say today that Israel will indeed participate in this conference?

[Arens] Israel definitely intends to participate in this conference. Mr. Baker is due to arrive this week, and we assume we will learn something new from him. I also assume that certain things will be finalized during his visit here. In any event, we have stated our commitment to attend the conference, but the conference is not the main thing; it is merely a ceremonial opening. The main thing is the direct negotiations between us and the neighboring countries.

[Shilon] But is it not true that our commitment is accompanied by conditions?

[Arens] Not conditions, merely principles on which we and Baker have agreed and which are related to the way this thing is to be conducted. One of these principles is that the opening will be a ceremonial occasion, after which—after two or three days—we will proceed at once with direct negotiations.

[Shilon] Now for the composition of the Palestinian delegation: A list of 20 Palestinian candidates for that delegation was published today. Is it at least partly acceptable to you?

[Arens] I have not seen the list, and no one has presented it to us. I doubt that this list has any validity whatsoever. We may address this issue when Mr. Baker arrives.

[Shilon] Can you conceive of a Palestinian delegate who declares that he does not identify with the PLO, or that he has not consulted with the PLO?

[Arens] I can certainly conceive of it, because I think it is clear to Mr. Baker and to everyone concerned that if

members of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation arise and declare that they are representing the PLO, they will be torpedoing the process of negotiations.

[Shilon] Do you mean that Israel will then get up and leave?

[Arens] Certainly.

[Shilon] Is Israel continuing overflights through Iraqi skies?

[Arens] You will understand if I refrain from going into operational details, but as I have already pointed out, we feel there is a possible danger from Iraq. We were exposed to Iraqi missiles during the Gulf war, and we have reason to believe that the Iraqis may be still capable of launching missiles. Therefore, we must obtain every bit of intelligence required for appropriate organization ahd preparation.

[Shilon] Some elements in the Israeli political constellation have termed the U.S. reaction to the possible Israeli overflights of Iraq insolence. Is this your reaction as well?

[Arens] I am a cabinet minister, and as such I cannot resort to such expressions. I would say, however, that I was definitely surprised and disappointed that the United States joined the demagogic protest Iraq submitted to the United Nations.

[Shilon] In hindsight, do you regret Israel's restraint during the Gulf war?

[Arens] I do not believe in regretting past events. We have to look to the future. At that time, we were guided by a variety of considerations, which I think were correct. Now we have considerations pertinent to today, and the responsibility for the security of the state and of its people lies with the Israeli Government, and it alone.

[Shilon] Defense Minister Moshe Arens, thank you for coming to our Jerusalem studio.

Sharon Demands 'Conditions'

TA1310162191 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Report by Asaf Ya'ari]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Commenting on U.S. Secretary of State Baker's forthcoming arrival in Israel, Construction and Housing Minister Sharon said that there were three conditions that the senior cabinet ministers must demand from the United States.

[Begin Sharon recording] Any identification with the PLO on the part of the Palestinian delegation should result in the Israeli and U.S. delegations leaving the conference hall. The goal and purpose of the talks should be a signed peace agreement between Israel and its neighbors. Third, there should be no compromise on the issue of the Palestinian representation. This must also be stated—all this, in addition to all the other points that have already been raised. [end recording]

Netanyahu on U.S. 'Commitments'

TA1410150991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by Roni Daniyel—live]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Daniyel] Is not the Israeli approach to the PLO slightly reminiscent of an ostrich's posture? Yasir 'Arafat is the one deciding the list of delegates, no matter where they live or what we think of them. He is the man with the final say. In this case, won't anyone who comes to the conference be PLO?

[Netanyahu] If these people receive their instructions from the PLO, if they say they are the PLO, demand what the PLO demands, then of course the negotiations will blow up at once. Actually, the negotiations may not even come into being. This is what the debates are about.

I think that what we should stress is that we expect the United States to honor its commitments to us. If commitments are not abided by, then agreements are worthless and all the debates are pointless. We have discussed numerous issues with the United States, which I will not detail at this point. The Arabs are obviously monitoring Washington's position no less carefully than we are. If they observe what they believe to be a U.S. bias against us, they will necessarily toughen their stands. We have just heard how Syria and others have presented tougher stands. This stems from their understanding that the United States has toughened its attitude to Israel. [passage omitted]

[Daniyel] What do we not like about the U.S. memorandum of understanding or letter of assurances?

[Netanyahu] I will not go in the details of the document, but we had reached several agreements with United States during the talks prior to the current discussions and in the past, over many years of Israeli-U.S. relations.

[Daniyel] Does this document renege on previous agreements?

[Netanyahu] It does not contain a full and exhaustive expression of all the agreements we have reached or of understandings we had assumed about U.S. policy, which were also ratified to us over the years—for example, opposition, very firm opposition, to a Palestinian state. It does not contain other things that again I will not detail.

[Daniyel] Is it a U.S. tactical move to bring the Palestinians to the conference, or is it a basic change in their position?

[Netanyahu] The Arabs do not view it as tactical, of that I can assure you. The Arabs regard it as a significant change in position, and if the Americans do not convince

them—and not only them—that they are an impartial mediator, or at least that they plan to demand from the Arabs an end to the state of war, the signing of a peace accord, and respect for the conditions of the framework the United States told us the Arabs had accepted from the start—which was our condition for our joining the negotiations—then without such point-blank U.S. clarifications I believe it will be very difficult to make progress toward a process containing a real promise of peace.

[Daniyel] Without such a clarification, when Baker arrives here Wednesday and presents the invitation to that gathering, will Israel respond negatively?

[Netanyahu] I am currently not dealing with hypotheses; I know what we should insist on. We are not talking about something marginal, but the very foundation of our existence. I am not being dramatic, I am not exaggerating. We are discussing the bases of our existence, and on that we will stand firm and if need be argue and explain. [passage omitted]

[Daniyel] How do those who have to make such decisions prepare for such a busy, dramatic week?

[Netanyahu] I will not go into the details of the preparations. I will only reiterate that we should view with concern Arab efforts, and not only Arab efforts, to exert pressure on us, as though we were the ones maintaining the state of war, as though we were the ones attacking the Arabs from those territories and not the contrary, as though we were the ones needing to atone for the war the Arab world has waged against us over the past 50 years. Those are the terms of the framework—or the intellectual framework, if you like—into which various conditions have been poured, and we must fight them and demand the principles I referred to earlier.

[Daniyel] Should we wish success after such a discussion?

[Netanyahu] We should wish us all not only success, but also steadfastness for the well-being of Israel and peace in the Middle East.

Minister Qatzav: No Palestinian State

TA1510063291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 15 Oct 91

[Telephone interview with Transportation Minister Moshe Qatzav by Hayim Zissowitz—live]

[Text] [Zissowitz] Good morning, Minister Qatzav.

[Qatzav] Good morning.

[Zissowitz] Our political correspondent Arye Golan just reported that there are still outstanding differences between Israel and the United States prior to the convening of the conference. Practically speaking, however, is Israel still uncertain regarding its participation in the regional conference?

[Qatzav] It is clear that there are still differences. There are still disagreements, and not all the details have been worked out. During Baker's current visit we will still have to iron out the unresolved issues. There are definitely certain conditions that Israel would like to insist upon. Look, we will not enter a process that we will not gain from. We shall not enter a process that may lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

[Zissowitz] One of the most important points that Israel is insisting upon is to disconnect the Palestinian representatives and the PLO. But Palestinian representatives from the territories will soon attend a joint news conference in Amman with PLO officials. Could their participation in such a news conference lead Israel to reach certain conclusions regarding its participation in the conference?

[Qatzav] We have held many talks with the Americans. The United States has unequivocally clarified that it will not force Israel to sit down with Palestinian representatives it finds unacceptable. We consider the PLO not only a hostile and terrorist element that attempted to carry out a terrorist attack in northern Israel, in Nahariyya, several weeks ago with 'Arafat's personal knowledge. They were unsuccessful and the terrorists were attacked, but the attempt took place with 'Arafat's personal knowledge, while he is ostensibly leading a peace move and promising not to carry out attacks against Israel. Our problem, however, is how we enter this process whose ultimate goal should be the achieving of peace agreements. This is a national yearning. This has been the aspiration of every government, and the greatest dream of the current Israeli Government is to sign a peace agreement with another Arab country.

[Zissowitz] Minister Qatzav, I am not sure I received an answer to my question. Would the participation of representatives from the territories in a joint news conference with the PLO, prior to the convening of the conference, serve as a pretext for Israel not to attend the conference?

[Qatzav] Palestinian representatives who declare that they are representing the PLO or any part of the PLO have no role to play in the political process. This was agreed upon in all our early meetings. To our regret, this is not some situation in which we can say that it is a peace agreement versus an Israeli rejection or acceptance. We are still dealing with procedures. In the early procedures we discussed the United States, and in indirect contacts with the Arab countries it was clear that PLO officials would not participate or assume any role in the peace process because Israel considers the PLO an element that could threaten the existence of the State of Israel. The PLO's greatest desire is to set up a Palestinian state in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. We cannot accept this condition, and I believe that there is a national consensus in Israel on this issue encompassing 90 percent of the public and Knesset members. The establishment of a Palestinian state in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip constitutes a real danger to the

existence of the State of Israel. Therefore, the PLO is not coming to talk with us about territorial compromise, about autonomy, or about any other issue but its one and only goal. That is why Israel cannot sit down with the PLO directly or indirectly under any conditions, and this issue must be clear.

[Zissowitz] The question is whether it will be clear to the visitor coming here in two days.

Al-Husayni, 'Ashrawi Return, Note Difficulties

TA1310203191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni and Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi returned secretly from Washington tonight. Al-Husayni told our correspondent Moti Amir that progress was made in talks with Secretary Baker in Washington but stressed that difficulties remain in the three main problems: the Palestinian representation, the Palestinian people's right for self-determination, and a freeze on settlements.

Dissatisfaction With Baker Talks

TA1410064391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Report by Moti Amir]

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni and Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, who have returned from Washington, are dissatisfied with the results of their talks with Baker. This time, the talks with Baker and his aides were arduous, long, and very serious, al-Husayni said last night. He stressed: Despite Baker's request, we are not leaving for Amman today, because it is not up to us to decide who should go there.

Sources in East Jerusalem said last night that although Jerusalem is satisfied with the amended paper of assurances that Israel has received, the Palestinians have nothing to be satisfied with, because the delegation members are believed to have failed in their talks with the U.S. secretary of state in Washington. East Jerusalem notables said the Americans had hurled insults at the members of the Palestinian delegation and stressed repeatedly that if the Palestinians do not join the peace conference on American terms, they would stand to lose a lot, because the conference would be convened without them.

As for the delegates' departure for Amman, the notables stressed that such a trip would be a mere token act, because only the PLO leaders are qualified to make the decision, down to the smallest detail, about the composition of the Palestinian delegation to negotiations and about the delegation's modus operandi at the peace conference.

Faysal al-Husayni noted last night that slight progress was made in the talks in Washington. He emphasized, however, that difficulties remain, and that the three main problems—those of greatest importance for the Palestinians—have not been satisfactorily resolved. The main problem appears to be the Palestinian representation, or rather, who the members of the delegation are to be, who will appoint them, and how the delegation will operate in negotiations at the peace conference.

The PLO has not yet reached an agreement on this issue, even with the Jordanians, its partner in the delegation.

East Jerusalem Rumored as Venue

TA1410191591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Report by Moti Amir]

[Text] A delegation of Palestinians will apparently leave for Amman tomorrow to discuss the agreements that were reached between the PLO and Jordan on the issue of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and its actions. East Jerusalem sources today reported that the meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Baker may this time take place in the U.S. Consulate in East Jerusalem and not in the consulate on Agron Street.

It is still unclear whether it will be Faysal al-Husayni and his two colleagues who will be leaving for Amman. Incidentally, Dr. Zakariya al-Agha has not returned to Israel and is staying in Dublin today on private business. Palestinian notables this evening emphasized that the PLO will authorize the delegation's departure to Amman after agreement is reached with the Jordanians on the joint delegation. An announcement on the above is expected tonight or perhaps tomorrow.

The members of the Palestinian delegation have a scheduled meeting with Secretary of State Baker in the U.S. Consulate on Wednesday afternoon. It is still not clear whether the meeting will take place in East Jerusalem or in the western part of the city. Sources in East Jerusalem claim that the Palestinians have an agreement with Baker according to which, if they indeed leave for Amman, he will accede to their request to conduct their eighth meeting in East Jerusalem.

U.S.-Palestinian 'Paper of Intent'

TA1410073191 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 14 Oct 91 p 2

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent 'Uzi Mahanaymi]

[Text] Last weekend, the United States and the Palestinians compiled a "paper of intent" on the basis of which the Palestinians expressed their willingness to go to the peace conference. In the document, the Palestinians gave up on the issue of their right to self-determination, and dropped their demand that the United States declare that the settlements are illegal. The issues on which an agreement was reached were compiled in a "memorandum of intent." Here are the main points of the document:

—The basis of the peace conference will be UN Resolutions 242 and 338, meaning territories for peace.

—The United States recognizes the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people.

—The Americans wish to establish new relations between Israel and the Palestinians, based on reciprocal respect for political rights and the right to security.

—The parties oppose settlements, which are an obstacle to peace.

—The Palestinians will choose their own delegation, with the preferred option being a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

—Israel will not have a right to veto the members of the Palestinian delegation.

—East Jerusalem will be represented by a Palestinian from Jordan.

—Representatives of Jerusalem and the Palestinian diaspora will be able to participate in discussions of the permanent arrangement.

—There will be no connection between the various bilateral talks. (For example, there will be no linkage between progress in the talks with Syria and progress in the talks with the Palestinians).

—The interim stage is designed to allow the peaceful transfer of rule from Israel to the Palestinians.

—A confederation with Jordan could be a permanent solution.

—Residents of East Jerusalem will be elected to the autonomy council.

Al-Husayni, 'Ashrawi Depart for Amman

TA1510061791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 15 Oct 91

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi this morning left Israel on their way to Amman. Dr. Zakariya al-Agha will arrive in Jordan from Ireland. The Palestinian delegation left for Jordan to discuss the composition of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation with Jordanian government officials. A PLO delegation from Tunis is also in Amman for discussions on the same issue.

Soviet Foreign Minister To Arrive 17 Oct

TA1310141891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Excerpt] Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin will arrive in Israel on Thursday [17 October]. This is reported by our political correspondent Arye Golan. In the course of his visit, Pankin will probably declare the establishment of full diplomatic ties with Israel. While in Jerusalem, Pankin will meet with the prime minister, the foreign and defense ministers, and other officials.

Our correspondent notes that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker will also be in Israel on Thursday. The two are slated to meet in Jerusalem on Friday. [passage omitted]

Full Relations Expected 'Next Week'

TA1210193091 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1930 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] Full diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Israel will apparently be resumed at the end of next week, during Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin's visit to Israel. This was reported by our Moscow correspondent Mikha'el Karpin.

Our correspondent adds that immediately after U.S. Secretary of State Baker publicly declares that all obstacles to the convening of the peace conference have been removed, Foreign Minister Pankin will announce the resumption of diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel.

The invitations to the peace conference have been signed by both the Soviet and U.S. Presidents and have already been sent to the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. Therefore, our correspondent notes, there is apparently nothing to hold up the resumption of full relations between the two countries.

Knesset Defeats No-Confidence Motion 55-46

TA1410154091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] The Knesset has expressed its confidence in the government, following Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's speech last week at the opening of the Knesset's winter session.

In a vote by name, 55 Knesset members [MK's], who are members of the coalition, supported the government. The 46 members of the opposition voted no-confidence in the government.

Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen reports that the two Tehiya MK's, Gershon Shafat and Elyaqim Ha'etzni, were in the Knesset building but did not enter the plenum to support the government. SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] MK Arye Gamli'el was also deliberately absent. The coalition asked the opposition to set off the vote of one its members due to the absence of MK Ge'ula Kohen, but the opposition refused.

Hizballah-Palestine Kidnapping Claim Denied

TA1410082091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] A radical Muslim organization has announced in Beirut that it has kidnapped an Israeli inside Israel and offered to exchange him for Arabs incarcerated in Israel.

The organization, which calls itself Hizballah-Palestine, states that the kidnapped man is Ya'aqov Samir Yitzhay. The statement does not say when the kidnapping took place.

Official Army sources told our correspondent Karmela Menashe that they know nothing about such a kidnapping.

Levi: PRC Foreign Minister May Visit 'Soon'

TA1310151091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] The Chinese foreign minister may arrive on a visit to Israel soon. This was announced by Foreign Minister David Levi at today's cabinet meeting.

Ne'eman Against UN Inspection of Nuclear Sites

TA1110124391 Tel Aviv TEL AVIV in Hebrew 11 Oct 91 pp 24, 25

[Interview with Yuval Ne'eman, minister of energy and infrastructure and of science and technology, by Gafi Amir; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Amir] Concerning our nuclear potential: David Kay, head of the UN mission, is looking for bombs in Iraq. Will we be able to hold him off forever? Will Israel possess nuclear bombs, while others are not allowed to?

[Ne'eman] The United Nations has decided that Zionism is racism. The United Nations has a negative attitude toward Israel. It has no authority to come here and examine our nuclear capability. Iraq is a member of the presidium of the UN International Atomic Energy Agency. Iraq signed the treaty for the nonproliferation of nuclear arms; we did not. The United Nations also wanted to set up an office here to deal with issues related to Judaea and Samaria, and I prevented it. The United Nations will have to declare war on us, as it did on Iraq. This has not happened yet because the United Nations does what the United States tells it. Bush would perhaps like to send the United Nations to wage a war against us, but Congress would not approve it. We must be careful. Propaganda in the United States is very important, but not in the United Nations. That organization is worthless.

[Amir] You know, there will be people who will read this and say: The professor is insane.

[Ne'eman] Let them. If they can prove that the facts I mentioned are wrong, they are welcome to do so. I am familiar with the United States. Unfortunately, it is a fact that the administration there is hostile to us.

[Amir] Is it not a bit too far-fetched to say that the U.S. President wants to send the United Nations to fight Israel?

[Ne'eman] I said that the U.S. President puts Shamir and Israel in the same category as Saddam and Iraq. [passage omitted]

[Amir] Are you not fighting old, outdated wars? The Soviet Union is falling apart, and you will not quit?

[Ne'eman] I believe this is silly. Those who really believe that the fact that the USSR is falling apart will make the world a better place are mistaken. It is enough to see how Serbs slaughter Croats. Let them tell the Arab who screams "Allahu Akbar" and stabs a tourist in Jerusalem that you do not do things like that in the 1990's. [passage omitted]

Defense Ties With U.S. Not Harmed by Politics

TA1310105491 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 13 Oct 91 p 2

[Report by Avi Bnayahu]

[Text] "The acrimonious atmosphere in Israeli-U.S. relations is not reflected in the security ties between the two countries," senior defense sources said this weekend.

In reply to a question by 'AL HAMISHMAR, the sources said that the annual strategic talks between the defense establishments of Israel and the United States are due to take place in Washington in late October and that there has so far been no change in that date. The defense sources believe that the U.S. Administration will not delay the talks or use them to apply pressure on Israel. "The Americans know how to distinguish between political pressure and their commitment to Israel's security and its qualitative edge over the Arab states," the sources said.

It will be recalled that about a year ago Secretary Baker announced at the last moment the postponement of the strategic talks between the two countries, and the Americans explained it by saying the administration and Congress had not yet completed discussions on the budget. It was understood in Israel and the United States that the delay was being used to apply pressure on Israel. Now, it is believed in Israel that the Joint Political Military Group talks set for late October will take place on time.

Other defense sources criticized the government's policy and the deterioration in relations with the United States, expressing concern that it could influence security ties. "The Arab leaders are telling the Americans that Israel is no longer a strategic asset for the United States, and Egypt is trying to take over Israel's place in the region, while the Shamir government is playing into Arab hands," the sources said.

King, Baker Hold Joint Press Conference

JN1410204691 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Joint press conference by King Husayn and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in Amman on 14 October—recorded]

[Text] [Husayn, in progress] ...of a process leading to a just and durable peace in this region. You have our admiration and respect for your sincere efforts, and I am very, very happy indeed to have had the opportunity to discuss with you all the developments so far, that are very promising and very positive. I believe that this is a very, very important visit, and it comes at a time when all of us in this region are preparing for steps to move towards a new threshold, hopefully, of hope, of the removal and destruction of barriers—ones that have existed for so long; of fear and suspicion, and doubts, and hatreds, maybe, in the interest of generations to come, in the interest of peace in this region. I have had the privilege, as have my colleagues, of discussing with you once again, sir, all developments, and I would like to say that we are satisfied, hopeful, and confident. Thank you very, very much.

[Baker] Thank you, Your Majesty. Let me follow what you have said by saying that I, too, think that this is an important visit. I believe that this is an important time. And I think that we will know, within a reasonably short period of time, whether we will have an active peace process for this region, or not—something that we have both been working on, sir, for quite some time. Let me repeat what I think I may have said the last time I was here in Amman; that is to say that I do not think anybody, your majesty, has been a more courageous in their support of peace, has been more forward leaning, or more helpful, than have you sir. And let me further say that I do not think that there can be an active and viable peace process, looking toward a comprehensive settlement or peace between Arabs and Israelis, without your active and strong support and participation. And I am delighted, your majesty, to be able to say once again that we are very grateful for that participation. We value that participation, and we thank you for welcoming us to Amman.

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct] the confusion about the Palestinian representatives in coming to Amman, a senior PLO official, we are told, is here in Amman—Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh—to discuss the framework of the delegation with the Jordanians. We hear that Hanan 'Ashrawi and the Palestinians we have met with in Washington are coming here. What is your understanding about what they will be doing here? What would you like to see done here—any interaction between them and the PLO?

[Baker] Well, let me say that I believe that there are, even as we speak here, Palestinians from the territories here in Amman who have been engaging with his majesty's government, but I leave that to his majesty to elaborate on. I cannot speak to the existence or not of the PLO here, although I am led to believe that it is not a surprising phenomenon for there to be PLO personnel in Amman, and that, in fact, some PLO personnel live in Amman. So, that does not surprise me, and should not surprise you. Our objective, of course, is to see a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation composed of Palestinians from the territories who support the phased, two-track approach that we have been outlining for six months, and who agree to live in peace with Israel. That is what we would like to see happen; that is what we are very hopeful will happen.

[Unidentified reporter] One of the things that the PLO delegation is looking for is the appointment of some kind of joint PLO-Jordanian—a kind of super council that would give instructions over the years to the delegations at the peace conference. And actually, I'd like you both to answer this: Do either of you think that.... [changes thought] Is that a role that will be helpful, or is that too high a profile a role for the PLO?

[Husayn] May I respond to that question?

[Baker] Please, Your Majesty.

[Husayn] And then to the previous one as well by saying that we are here in Jordan and have been in touch with Palestinians—Palestinians in the occupied territories—and the dialogue is continuing, and we hope to have some results soon, and Palestinians everywhere and we Jordanians are a people that have come together, and regardless of our origins, we have an awareness of our responsibility at this very, very critical moment in terms of the present and the future. And I had the privilege of addressing the people of Jordan barely a few days ago over the issue of peace. And I laid before them all the options, and eventually I believe that there is such an endorsement that is really heartening, and which comes for an awareness and a genuine desire to see progress towards the establishment of a just and durable peace that we have always sought by the people of Jordan that is really a source of pride to me and certainly is a sign of the maturity and the commitment to the cause of peace by the people of this country.

[Unidentified reporter] Your Majesty, have the Palestinians said that they will come to the peace table? Have they told you that specifically, yes they will accept, they will come?

[Husayn] I believe that everything will become clear in a very short space of time, and as far as the process of preparing for the launching of this massive effort, I believe that everything is satisfactory and is promising and I understand that we have a dialogue ongoing. I know that, and I know that others are coming to see us shortly. So in regard to the preparation for the process, I believe that everything is under control, and I hope that we will have some definite conclusions within a very, very short space of time.

[Baker] We do not, we are not negotiating with the PLO. As I've said for five or six months, we are talking about Palestinians from the territories who subscribe to the two-track approach, agree to the phasing, and agree to live in peace with Israel. It is not our objective to bring or get Israel into a dialogue with the PLO.

[Husayn] Fine. I would like to suggest here that as far as we're concerned, we are in touch along the lines as the secretary had made clear, I hope, in his answer with our Palestinian brethren in the occupied territories. We are also in a position to be in touch with Palestinians everywhere in the diaspora. And obviously this is not new. This has continued over many years, and will continue. Thank you.

[Unidentified reporter] What [words indistinct] the Palestinians?

[Husayn] I believe that the definition of the process about to begin has been outlined by the secretary.

[Unidentified reporter] Let's try anyhow. Is the PLO playing a constructive role, Mr. Secretary? Back during the war, the administration was rather disappointed with both the PLO and with Jordan. And you've overcome, obviously, your disappointment with Jordan's position which his majesty explained in Jordanian terms. Is the PLO now approaching the point where the United States has some sense of gratitude or appreciation, at least, for their cooperation with Palestinians who you have been talking to?

[Baker] I've just given you our position with respect to the PLO and that is our position and I'll leave it as I stated it.

[Husayn] And I would like to add the PLO are Palestinians essentially, and we are in touch with all Palestinians in the diaspora and in the occupied territories, but for the purposes of the process, we are perfectly in line with our friends here, in terms of trying to prepare within the very immediate future for the task ahead and for the challenge ahead, and obviously, we are in touch with Palestinians everywhere.

[Unidentified reporter] Has Jordan accepted the letter of assurances?

[Second unidentified reporter, interrupting] Every time you visited Israel you've been welcomed by a new Jewish settlement in the occupied territories, and this time you are going to visit Israel and you are welcomed by a new Jewish settlement. Do you think there is a special message that Israel is trying to give the United States?

[Baker] Perhaps. [laughter] Let me say though... [changes thought] let me follow that up by making clear just so there is no misunderstanding, that we've said that we think settlements are an obstacle to peace. That is the well-known policy position of the United States that has not changed and that will not change.

[Unidentified reporter] Will you condition the loan guarantees in January to the Jewish settlements?

[Baker] We have sought and obtained a 120-day delay of the question with respect to absorption aid for the very purpose of avoiding a contentious and divisive debate along the lines of your question. Therefore, we will not address that question until January, at the earliest.

[Unidentified reporter] In your conversation with his majesty, you now preceive that prospect of arriving in Israel with a list of names of possible Palestinian candidates which you can then go over with, with the Israelis?

[Baker] Well, let's not, wait a minute, let me.... [changes thought] I was anticipating a different question, I do not have in mind doing that, that is not something that I intend to do or have in mind doing. With respect to whether or not we will have names concerning the Palestinian delegation or the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation by the time I get to Israel, I cannot answer that. What I can say to you is something I said on a couple of occasions over the course of the past six or seven months. The bus is not going to come by again, and Palestinians have more to gain from this process and more to lose in its absence than anybody else. But we can't want peace more than the parties themselves, so we can only do what we can do.

[Unidentified reporter] Your Majesty, has Jordan accepted the letter of assurances from the Americans?

[Husayn] I beg your pardon?

[Reporter] Has Jordan, have you accepted the letter of asurances?

[Hysayn] Yes, we have received it, and we are looking at it, of course, yes.

[Unidentified reporter] Did you accept it? Is it satisfactory?

[Husayn] I understand it is, yes.

[Unidentified reporter] Are there any changes now on this trip, the letter of assurances to Jordan?

[Husayn] This has been the subject of discussions, I believe earlier on, and we have received the letter or the final draft of it this evening, so we are looking at it, but I think there is no problem there.

[Unidentified reporter] Mr. Baker, do you say that you are not going to consider the loan guarantees question for 120 days at the earliest? Is there a new signal or hint there for the Israelis that it might not be 120 days, it might actually be longer?

[Baker] No. I said until January at the earliest, Allen. I think you misunderstood what I said, and January now is not 120 days away. But the question is one of when Congress gets organized and when it gets down to the business of the new session. There is no new signal, said or intended.

[Unidentified reporter] Sir, where will the conference take place?

[Husayn] I haven't any ideas yet.

[Unidentified reporter] Your Majesty, there's been some discussion lately over the phase of the conference that would deal with water resources, arms proliferation. There's some question whether the Syrians are willing to attend. Will Jordan be at that phase of talks, if there is such a phase?

[Husayn] If you are asking about the regional dimension of it, yes. We will be, definitely.

[Unidentified reporter] Mr. Secretary, the Palestinians are insisting on representatives from Jerusalem in the delegation. If this issue remains unresolved and threatens Palestinian participation, will the U.S. be willing to compromise on this?

[Baker] We have had extensive discussions with Palestinians from the territories about the issue of the make-up of the Palestinian delegation. We are continuing to have such discussions, had some as recently as this weekend. And, beyond that I am not going to go into it further to tell you.

[Husayn] Sir, with your permission, I would like to thank our friends very, very much indeed. And, I would like to appeal to you, all of you, please help us and understand that this is a very critical, important moment in history. We need your help and support, and we need you to help us in the sense of assisting us in avoiding the creation of obstacles to a process that hopefully will start soon. Thank you very, very much indeed.

King Husayn Speaks on Peace Process

JN1210160191 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1530 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] Amman, 12 Oct (PETRA)—His Majesty King Husayn has said that settling the Arab-Israeli dispute and reaching the aspired peace through a conference to be convened for this purpose not only involves Jordan and Israel; it is an issue between Israel and the world; and it is an issue between either allowing international law to establish international peace or to rebel against it. The whole world does not approve of what the Israeli leadership is saying—that it will not cede one inch of the occupied Arab territories—because this is not in keeping with international legitimacy. In fact, a growing percentage of the Israeli people are adopting this international position.

His majesty added that the Israeli leadership has followed this approach before in regard to its settlements in Sinai, when it kept on saying that it would not remove them. The Israeli Government, however, changed its position as a result of negotiations and international pressure to make peace with Egypt and as a result of Egypt's commitment to international legitimacy.

Addressing the general national congress held at the Palace of Culture in the al-Husayn Youth City this afternoon, His Majesty King Husayn said as part of a comprehensive pan-Arab speech that the basis of the solution is international legitimacy and the land-for-peace formula, which is a clear formula. In this case, Israel's loss will be greater than ours; in fact, our loss as a result of participating in the negotiations will be less than if we were not to participate at all, for a just peace is linked to every facet of our life to the extent that any initiative to bring it about deserves a serious attempt on our part. Therefore, making efforts and attempts is a national responsibility; shirking this responsibility would mean letting down the homeland, no matter how elaborate the justifications might be.

His majesty said that all Arab states and parties have espoused peace and accepted a peaceful resolution to the Arab-Israeli dispute and the Palestinian issue. This position has developed gradually, beginning with Jordan's and Egypt's acceptance of the 1967 UN Security Council Resolution 242, then Syria's acceptance of Security Council Resolution 338 in the wake of the 1973 October War—which provided, among other things, for action to implement Resolution 242—and then Egypt's conclusion of a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, and a consensus reached by Arab leaders at the 1982 Fez summit to subscribe to a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli dispute, and ending with the 1988 Palestinian peace initiative that won Arab and world support and was followed by an official dialogue between the United States and the PLO in Tunis.

His Majesty added that in the interim, the peace initiatives and international efforts to achieve peace have not ceased. Here we are now dealing with another peace initiative, the new elements of which sprang from a series of facts, the most important of which is that the initiative is based on international legitimacy and the seriousness of the present U.S. Administration's efforts and stands in the interests of promoting peace, and the shift of the USSR and the United States from being two antagonistic parties to being two partners collaborating to establish peace. He said that these two facts have helped secure an opportunity for a convergence between the Arab side and the influential international side toward resuming a peace endeavor more serious than its predecessors.

His Majesty King Husayn reviewed the most outstanding features of the proposed peace and said that they incorporate fundamental, general principles, such as the fact that they highlight the land-for-peace formula and the fact that Resolution 242 applies to all occupied Arab territory, including Jerusalem. He said that all Arab parties involved have consented to attend the proposed peace conference, including the PLO. His majesty expressed his warm welcome to the 20th Palestine National Council's decision regarding the peace conference.

His Majesty King Husayn emphasized that we are at a crossroads dictated by national, Arab, and international circumstances that bear on each Jordanian here and on each Palestinian inside and outside the occupied homeland. These circumstances have an impact on our existence and future as a state, society, and people, and reflect on the particulars of our national and Arab life, beginning with addressing the problem of unemployed youths and ending with our national and pan-Arab existence. These circumstances require a historic decision to attend the peace conference which, if it succeeds, should enable us to turn these circumstances into positive elements that would move us from a depressed mood, plagued by a sense of doom, to one throbbing with hope and relaxation; from a 40-odd-year-old mood of confrontation and its attendant suffering, anxiety and pain, and mode of thought and emotions that have characterized our life in the meantime, to a state of peace and security, stability, and opportunities for development and progress they promise, both for the individual and the community alike. These circumstances would shift us from the state of no war and no peace and the concomitant continuation of the status quo and the exacerbation of its evils, to a state of peace of mind and security that should foster the talents and hopes of the young and unlock their potential for giving and creating.

His Majesty King Husayn said that we in Jordan—while being fully aware of the real facts and the regional and global balance of power; in light of the great suffering of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and the oppressive policy they are being subjected to, as well as the increasing threats to their very presence in their land, as a result of immigration and settlement; and because of the direct effect all of the events there have on Jordan—will participate in the peace conference. We will participate to protect ourselves, rescue our country and people, be able to lead a normal and natural life, stop the depletion of our resources and potential, and help the struggling Palestinian people who have so far endured more than can be accurately described in words.

His majesty adds: This is our decision, which we make for the sake of a just peace to revive our hopes and put an end to the status quo which would continue to gnaw at us bit by bit until it is too late.

His Majesty King Husayn said he will employ all of the potential at his disposal, proceeding from the perspective of his responsibilities as leader, to support and stand behind the Jordanian delegation to the negotiations. He called for a cohesive rallying behind the government's efforts and support for the huge national mission it will be undertaking.

His majesty called for abandoning the inclination to self-destruction in our thinking and minds and putting an end to the sweeping tendencies of outbidding each other and living with illusions. We should heed God for our nation and children, our present and future. We should shoulder responsibilities and not elude them or leave them for coming generations. We should remember that the majority of Jordanians and Palestinians cannot afford the luxury of betting on the unknown.

Hizballah Calls For 'Escalation' of Resistance

NC1510071191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 15 Oct 91

[Text] Hizballah Secretary General 'Abbas al-Musawi has visited the al-Rashidiyah camp in the Tyre area, where he was received by a large number of people. His eminence went to the house of martyr 'Ali Nimr Khalil, whose body was recently handed over with the corpses of the nine martyrs, and conveyed his condolences to the family.

His eminence then went to the camp mosque where he said: We appeal to all the Muslim peoples everywhere to act to open all the fronts which were drawn up by the infidel imperialism so that we can become one body. He added that the Islamic resistance in Lebanon and the Islamic intifadah in Palestine are the best evidence of the Muslims' unity. Calling for continuing jihad, he said: Escalation of jihad threatens Israel's existence.

Group Issues Communiques on Kidnapped Israeli

JN1410200391 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Hizballah-Palestine, formerly Islamic Jihad Forces-Bayt-al-Maqdis, issued a subsequent communique. The following is its text:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.
Hizballah: The party of God will prevail. [Koranic verse]
Bayt-al-Maqdis, Palestine, the Hizballah Forces command.

Subsequent: Supplement to our communique issued 5 Rabi' Thani, 1412 Hegira, corresponding to 13 October 1991, regarding the capture of a member of the Jewish occupation forces in Palestine named Ya'aqov Samir Yitzhaq, we add that this prisoner was employed in the procurement [tajhizat] base as expert No. 6521, Unit M.O.H.I, No. 233. He carries the military identification number 4,693,737.

[signed] Hizballah-Palestine, formerly the Islamic Jihad Forces-Bayt-al-Maqdish.
Dated 7 Rabi' Thani, 1412 Hegira, corresponding to 15 October 1991.

Hizballah-Palestine, formerly the Islamic Jihad Forces-Bayt-al-Maqdis, earlier distributed the following military communique:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate:
Hizballah: The party of God shall prevail. [Koranic verse]
Bayt-al-Maqdis, Palestine, the Hizballah Forces command.

Military Communique:

The Hizballah Forces command, Bayt-al-Maqdis, Palestine, announces that martyr Sabir al-Hilu group from 'Ushshaq al-Shahadah [Lovers of Martyrdom] battalion, operating inside occupied Palestine, has taken prisoner a member of the enemy intruding on the house of Islam named Ya'aqov Samir Yitzhaq and placed him under guard at a base of our forces.

In the interests of the life of the prisoner, the Hizballah Forces command warns the repressive Zionist authorities on the measures of encirclement, searches, breaking into homes, and arbitrary arrests typically used by them. The operation is calculated to exchange the military prisoner for a number of our brother prisoners, who have been incarcerated in enemy jails for too long. We will supply their names in a subsequent communique.

For its part, the prisoner's family has to demand that the repressive forces forthwith cease repression, storming of Arab homes, and arrests.

Our kinfolk in the occupied land, our brothers in enemy prisons: Be patient and steadfast. We are with you. Assailants know what vicissitudes their affairs will take. [preceding sentence Koranic verse]

[signed] Hizballah-Palestine, formerly Bayt-al-Maqdis.
Dated 5 Rabi' Thani, 1412 Hegira, corresponding to 13 October 1991.

Expectation of U.S. Hostage Release Reported

NC1410060991 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Diplomatic sources have disclosed that Giandomenico Picco, UN secretary general envoy who is handling the file of Western hostages and prisoners, arrived in Syria yesterday and is expected to arrive in Beirut afterward.

Picco has visited the Lebanese and Syrian capitals several times since UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar began his efforts to release Western hostages in Lebanon. Meanwhile, the Iranian newspaper TEHRAN TIMES today carries a report by its correspondent in Beirut. The report says that a Western hostage, most probably American, will be released soon.

Political Circles 'Stunned' by U.S. Advisory

NC1310063591 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] It came perhaps as a shock to political circles yesterday that the U.S. State Department warned U.S. nationals not to pass through Lebanon while traveling between Paris and Amman. The State Department maintains that U.S. passports are not valid for travel to or via Lebanon. This move has stunned political circles in Lebanon, especially as it comes on the eve of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's visit to the region to deliver invitations to heads of state, including Lebanon's president, to attend the international conference.

The same circles point out that this move is concurrent with the UN preventing the Lebanese Army's deployment in the operations areas of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon and they fear that this is a result of Israeli

orchestration to put Lebanon in a tight corner and weaken its position prior to the international conference.

Buwayz Rejects UN Explanation on Army Moves

NC1310112291 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] In an interview with our radio, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said the United Nations has its own viewpoint on the Lebanese Army's involvement in the south. According to this viewpoint, the United Nations has a specific mission to accomplish in accordance with UN resolutions and the Lebanese Army's involvement may not be conducive to accomplishing this mission.

Second, Buwayz said, the United Nations believes that the Lebanese Army is emotionally and politically committed to the cause the United Nations is commissioned to handle. Hence, it may not be able to act objectively, putting its commitment aside. Moreover, he said, the United Nations may believe that Israel could use all kinds of excuses before the peace conference and we are in no position to give Israel the excuse to ruin what is being accomplished there.

Minister Buwayz concluded: These are the excuses they are giving and we have a completely different viewpoint. We believe that the Army's gradual deployment in the area of operation of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon will eventually prove Lebanon's right to impose its sovereignty over the region.

Afghanistan

Rebels Cut Kabul-Jalalabad Highway

BK1510091691 Hong Kong AFP in English 0837 GMT 15 Oct 91

[Text] Islamabad, Oct 15 (AFP)—Afghan mojahedin early Tuesday cut the highway linking the capital Kabul with the city of Jalalabad, the rebel-run AFGHAN ISLAMIC PRESS (AIP) reported.

It said some 800 mojahedin from several parties had blocked a 35- kilometer (20-mile) stretch of the highway between the districts of Sarobi and Surkhakan on the fourth day of guerrilla attacks on the country's third largest city.

Jalalabad, which lies 120 kilometers (75 miles) east of Kabul, will have to be supplied by air if the blockade is not removed, AIP said.

The mojahedin, who have been shelling Jalalabad since Friday, shot down an Afghan jet Monday as Kabul government planes intensified their bombing raids on guerrilla bases around the city.

The rebels began their assault after suffering heavy human and material losses in their September 30 attempt to capture Gardeyz, a strategic gateway to the capital.

Rebel sources said Gardeyz, 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of Kabul, remained under guerrilla siege, while the Afghan Government claimed the attack was beaten off after 10 days of fierce fighting in which both sides suffered heavy losses.

Mojaddedi on 'Key' Soviet Role in Settlement

LD1310111791 Tehran IRNA in English 1001 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] Islamabad, Oct. 13, IRNA—President of the Afghan Interim Government, Sebqatollah Mojaddedi, here Sunday stressed that the key to the settlement of the Afghan issue is with the Soviet Union. Speaking at a press conference, Mojaddedi said he was 'optimistic' about the outcome of the forthcoming talks between the Afghan mujahedin leaders and the Soviet officials to be held in the next two weeks.

He pointed to a recent statement by four Peshawar-based mujahedin groups in which they called for continued struggle. He said under the present conditions, views of the majority of the Afghan groups, based in Iran and Pakistan, must be taken into consideration so that the crisis will be settled and interests of the Afghan people be secured. Whether any opposition of certain mujahedin groups with the current efforts to solve the issue will impede restoration of peace in the country, Mojaddedi said once views of the majority of the mujahedin leaders are put into practice, there will be no problem.

However, Mojaddedi stressed, participation of figures from the ruling communist regime in Afghanistan in future government of the country "is totally rejected by all mujahedin groups." Mojaddedi said the proposed 5-point plan of U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar is "a positive and principled step to settle the Afghan crisis." He added that most countries had agreed with Perez de Cuellar's plan and most of the mujahedin leaders in their recent joint meetings in Islamabad and Tehran had evaluated it positively.

Mojaddedi noted that alongside the 5-point plan, he had proposed a joint session of all Afghan commanders, ulema, mujahedin leaders and technocrats which will either be held in Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, Turkey or another country within the next month. According to Mojaddedi the proposed list of the participants, submitted by the interim government to the U.N. secretary general, included names of some 250 people, among them "good Muslims of Kabul."

As for the outcome of his recent meetings with American officials, Mojaddedi said he was assured of "continued humanitarian assistance of Washington's to the Afghan mujahedin."

India

Police: Information Gathered on Kidnapped Diplomat

BK1310162091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] Delhi police say they have gathered useful information in the search to apprehend the kidnappers of the Romanian diplomat, Mr. Liviu Radu. A police spokesman said the search efforts have been intensified. He said the public is also coming forward to help in the search operations.

The Delhi police commissioner, Mr. Arun Bhagat, today had a meeting with the senior police officials of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to review progress in the investigation. Mr. Bhagat later announced that any police officer who helps to trace the diplomat will be given an out-of-turn promotion. Any member of the public providing information leading to the release of Mr. Liviu Radu will be given a handsome reward.

Meanwhile, the kidnapped Romanian diplomat's wife, Mrs. (Catherina Radu) has urged the government to do everything possible to get her husband released. Addressing a news conference at her residence in the capital, she also appealed to the militants to adopt a kind attitude toward her husband who is in no way related to the problems.

Official sources say that the publicity given by the media to the kidnappers' demands is causing concern to the authorities. They pointed out that the objective of the kidnappers is to obtain publicity for their demands and exert pressure on the authorities.

Spokesman on Remarks by Diplomat's Wife

BK1410135691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry says the views expressed by Mrs. Caterina Radu, wife of the kidnapped Romanian diplomat, at a press conference yesterday are not the views of the Romanian Government on the issue. The spokesman told newspersons today that the government is in constant touch with the Romanian authorities on the kidnapping incident. The spokesman, however, said that the government appreciates the fact that there is a strong personal element in what Mrs. Radu said.

President Receives New Envoy's Credentials

BK1510104891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 15 Oct 91

[Text] The president, Mr. R. Venkataraman, has assured Romania that the Government of India is making all-out efforts to secure the safe release of the abducted Romanian diplomat, Mr. Liviu Radu. He told the new Romanian ambassador, Mr. (Nelu Iliescu), who presented his credentials to him at the Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House] today, that he was distressed at the unfortunate incident. Mr. Venkataraman requested the new envoy to convey to Mr. Radu's family that he shared their concern in this matter. Welcoming the new ambassador, the president hoped that the political changes in Romania will bring the two nations closer.

Earlier, the new ambassador apprised Mr. Venkataraman of the developments in his country toward democratization. He hoped that the bilateral ties will be further strengthened with high-level visits and the proposed direct air flights between Bucharest and Calcutta planned to be inaugurated this year.

Sonia Gandhi Declines To Run in Election

BK1210125891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] Mrs. Sonia Gandhi has declined to contest the Lok Sabha by-election from Amethi. The Congress-I president, Mr. Narasimha Rao, who met her this morning, told newspersons in New Delhi that Mrs. Gandhi will not be contesting the election. Mr. Rao had an informal chat with the newspersons who are accompanying him to Harare on his forthcoming week-long visit.

The Congress-I Parliamentary Board met in New Delhi this morning to consider party candidates for by-elections to the Lok Sabha and assembly constituencies. The party president, Mr. Narasimha Rao, presided. The meeting adjourned after three hours of discussion and is again taking place from 1800 this evening. According to party sources, the Parliamentary Board cleared candidates for seven Lok Sabha and 18 [state] assembly constituencies in Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya, Assam, Orissa, West Bengal, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra. No names have, however, been announced.

LTTE Leader Said Behind Gandhi Assassination

BK1510105091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 15 Oct 91

[Text] The Sri Lankan authorities claim to have evidence to show that the assassinations of Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan Minister Ranjan Wijeratne were directed by a senior LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] leader. The Sri Lankan news agency LANKA PUWATH reports that the LTTE leader who was behind the assassination was Pottuman, holding the same rank of Mahattaya but was next in command to Prabhakaran. The report, quoting official sources, says the assassination plot was put together at the Nallur base of the LTTE.

Iran

U.S. Hostage Release Expected 'Soon'

NC1410092091 Paris AFP in English 0906 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Tehran, Oct 14 (AFP)—A U.S. captive in Lebanon may be released soon in response to continued efforts by the pro-Iranian Shiite group Hizballah to close the hostage file, the TEHRAN TIMES reported Monday. "Maybe one American will go home soon, if no unforeseen incidents take place as happened earlier," the newspaper, which is close to the government, quoted its Beirut correspondent as saying.

The paper last month predicted that two Westerners were about to be released. But in the event only Briton Jack Mann was set free September 24 and an American is therefore due to be released, the correspondent was quoted as saying.

The newspaper report came as U.N. hostage negotiator Giandomenico Picco was in Damascus in a fresh bid to arrange further releases of Western hostages in Lebanon and Lebanese Muslim prisoners detained by Israel. Picco earlier visited Syria and Lebanon in response to a letter received in early August by U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar from the kidnappers of Western hostages. That trip was followed by the release American hostage Edward Tracy.

The TEHRAN TIMES correspondent said Hizballah was continuing its "humanitarian" efforts to seek the release of hostages despite what he called Israeli intransigence "towards the Lebanese and Palestinian Muslims who are living in the worst possible conditions in the Zionist jails."

Hostage-takers are demanding the release of some 350 of these prisoners, held in Israeli-controlled southern Lebanon and in Israel itself, in return for the Westerners.

"You know the situation of (the hostages) is so complicated and so many people are involved in this issue that the efforts from Iran and the United Nations can be marred by a slightest mistake or a provocative statement from any side," the correspondent told the English-language paper.

"Now, I'm more optimistic than any time before that one Western hostage, maybe an American will be freed," he said. Nine Westerners—five Americans, two Germans, a Briton and an Italian—are still held in Lebanon and are believed to be in the hands of pro-Iranian Shiite militants. Hizballah has denied holding any of the hostages but the group is close to those who are.

Italian Charge Summoned Over Rimini Incident

LD1510112491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 15 Oct 91

[Text] The Italian charge d'affaires in Tehran was summoned to the Foreign Ministry yesterday evening and a strong protest from the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI] was conveyed to him about the presence of terrorist hypocrites [Mojahedin-e Khalq] at the Rimini conference and their attack on the IRI's delegation, which had gone to Italy at the official invitation of that country's prime minister and foreign minister. During this meeting the head of the Foreign Ministry's office in charge of West European affairs strongly protested the presence of a group of terrorists at the ceremonies attended by the envoy of the IRI's Foreign Ministry. He pointed out: Mr. Velayati was invited by Italy's prime minister and foreign minister and the invitation stressed that all security matters had been taken care of. Such an occurrence at a ceremony of international significance, where the top-ranking officials of several countries were present, is therefore amazing and cannot be justified.

The Italian charge d'affaires expressed regret over the incident, saying: The Italian Government formally apologizes for this matter, and Italy's foreign minister has ordered the Italian police to investigate this incident immediately.

Improved Ties With Saudi Arabia, GCC Viewed

LD1310081591 Tehran IRNA in English 0618 GMT 13 Oct 91

[Text] Tehran, Oct. 13, IRNA—Iran and members of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) will meet in March for the second time to outline a comprehensive plan for bilateral and regional security issues. First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati disclosed the above in an interview with the English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' Sunday.

Foreign ministers of Iran and PGCC countries held their first meeting of the year in New York in September during the 46th annual session of the United Nations General Assembly. On Iran's relations with its neighboring countries, Besharati said that during his recent visit to the war devastated Kuwait, the Kuwaiti prime minister expressed interest in a full-scale cooperation. "The Kuwaiti officials said that we are ready to assign all reconstruction jobs to the Iranians," he added.

As for relations with Saudi Arabia, the Foreign Ministry official said, "during the last two decades we never had so much cordial relations with that country as we have today." "We are expecting that the number of Iranian pilgrims will increase and 150,000 Iranians be able to go for this year's religious duty," Besharati continued. "In short I can say our relations with Saudi Arabia are better today and will be further better tomorrow. The same is true for other regional countries who have expressed their desire for closer cooperation with the Islamic regime," Besharati told TEHRAN TIMES.

Yazdi Condemns Moves 'Legitimizing' Israel

LD1410105691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] In today's meeting of the judicial branch, Ayatollah Yazdi remarked on the objectives of the International Conference in Support of the Islamic Revolution of Palestine, which is to be convened in Tehran. He said: Countering the decision of the Palestine National Council based on participating in the U.S.-proposed peace conference is one of the principal objectives of this conference.

Mr. Yazdi added: We hope this conference will succeed in echoing the oppressed voices of the Palestinians to the world, as well as revealing the arrogant objectives of the United States and its lackeys. The head of the judicial branch said: Any move toward legitimizing Israel—on whatever level—is condemned from the viewpoint of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Yazdi on Palestinian Representation for Summit

LD1410171391 Tehran IRNA in English 1528 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Text] Tehran, Oct. 14, IRNA—The participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and his aides in a Middle East peace conference would not mean their representation of all Palestinian strugglers, the head of the judiciary said here Monday. "To defy a decision made by the Palestine National Council to take part in the U.S.-proposed peace conference is among the major goals of an international conference on Palestine (to open here October 17)," Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi said. "To the Islamic Republic, any move at whatever level towards recognizing Israel is condemned," Ayatollah Yazdi said at a routine meeting of judicial officials. No other country in the world has ever supported the Palestinian people as much as Iran has, Yazdi said, adding that backing Palestine is based on the principles of the Islamic Republic.

Habibi Condemns Reports on Troops' Departure

LD1410115191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 14 Oct 91

[Excerpts] Dear listeners, as you are aware, First Vice President Habibi gives a news conference every Monday, as the government spokesman, in which he expounds the latest proposals adopted by the cabinet and answers questions put to him by reporters. We draw your attention to a report on today's news conference with the government spokesman. [passage omitted]

On the cabinet's perfomance with regard to the leader's guidelines on avoiding ostentatious life-styles and the need to confront the cultural onslaught, the first vice president said: The issue of confronting the cultural onslaught was discussed by the Supreme National Security Council and debates are now taking place in that regard. On avoiding ostentatious life-styles, regulations and codes of conduct were issued on that very same day, and in any case the eminent leader will be informed of the results of the actions taken in both cases.

Elsewhere in the conference, the government spokesman termed the acceptance of the rial by the Central Bank in respect to foreign trade dealings, as a positive point and a beneficial factor in terms of stabilizing the rial's international position.

Mr. Habibi described the announcement regarding an agreement over the departure of the Islamic Republic Guards Corp's forces from Lebanon, which was published by that country's press, as unfounded and baseless. He said: Under circumstances in which the world's attention is turned to the International Conference in Support of the Islamic Revolution of Palestine, and the United States' efforts to compromise the Palestine issue, the objective behind raising such issues is to divert world opinion.

Iraqi Opposition To Form Government in Exile

LD1210212991 Tehran IRNA in English 1816 GMT 12 Oct 91

[Text] London, Oct. 12, IRNA—Iraqi opposition groups here intend to form a government-in-exile after their meeting in al-Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, late November. If sources here are to be believed this new formation will represent the various strata of the Iraqi people and will have the support of Iran, Turkey, Syria, Saudi Arabia and the West led by the United States.

Salih Sa'd Jabr, a dissident Iraqi who is active in London against the ruling Baathist regime expressed hope that the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI)—the major opposition to Baathist rule in Iraq—would participate in the al-Ta'if assembly as an independent group and not within the framework of the Damascus agreement. Jabr is to arrive in Tehran Sunday in order to explore the possibilites. In his three-day stay in Tehran he is to confer with Iranian Foreign Ministry officials and with the SAIRI leader, Hojjat ol-Eslam Muhammad-Baqir Hakim. Jabr was last in Tehran two months ago.

Included in the agenda of the al-Ta'if assembly is the election of 60 members of the Free Parliament of Iraq, 11 of whom will form the cabinet of the Iraqi government in exile.

Jabr says the Communist Party of Iraq, and the chapter of the Baath party in Damascus as well as the Syrian Government are the only groups opposed to the al-Ta'if assembly. Jabr claims to represent upwards of 20 dissident groups including the nationalist and non-Islamic groups in talks with representatives of world governments especially Britain.

U.S. Presence, Nation's Reaction Viewed

NC1410212691 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 6 Oct 91 pp 1, 4

[Editorial by M. Qums: "Diplomacy and National Strategy"]

[Excerpts] The 10-year security agreement between the United States and Kuwait, allowing a U.S. troop deployment on Bubiyan island, and rumors that similar military agreements will be signed between the United States and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are events of immense significance. [passage omitted] The nature of relations between Iran and the United States in the past decades indicates that Iran has never accepted U.S. hegemony in the region. This is why the possibility of relations between Iran and the United States does not exist. Such problems in the political sphere mean that Iran and the United States have serious, fundamental differences. This vast U.S. presence so close to Iran poses immense regional security hazards.

The U.S. justification for the security agreement with Kuwait and other Persian Gulf countries is invalid, especially because they always mention the danger of an Iraqi attack. It is very clear that the Iraqi regime is not a potential danger to these countries; what the United States does view as a danger, however, is its fear of Islam and the Muslim people in the region. It is clear that the trend of the Islamic awakening in the region is the main reason behind the Americans' dread. The Americans are trying to control and besiege the centers of this Islamic awakening in the region by intimidation, rancor, and by flaunting their military capabilities. The Persian Gulf has oil and gas reserves which play a vital role in the blossoming of the economic prosperity and trade of the West, the United States in particular. [passage omitted]

Iranian diplomacy should try to create conditions which, first and foremost, endorse Iranian interests and develop a spirit of stability and independence in Persian Gulf countries.

Strategic alliances cannot be forged with regimes which have military and security links with the United States. These cannot conform to the principles of Iranian foreign policy, which negates the domineering presence of the United States and Zionism. This does not mean, however, that we should ignore the need for relations based on peaceful coexistence and the expansion of economic and cultural relations.

In the past few months, Iranian diplomacy has not been very clear in its approach to such issues and, unfortunately, some media have merely resorted to airing viewpoints based on slogans instead of clarifying the problem's importance and dimensions.

The United States is now in the area and has embarked on consolidating its policies, which are opposed to Iran and the vital interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region. The steps taken by our diplomacy in this path to protect our interests are faltering and uncertain and, at times, exacerbate the ambiguity of our politicians' remarks.